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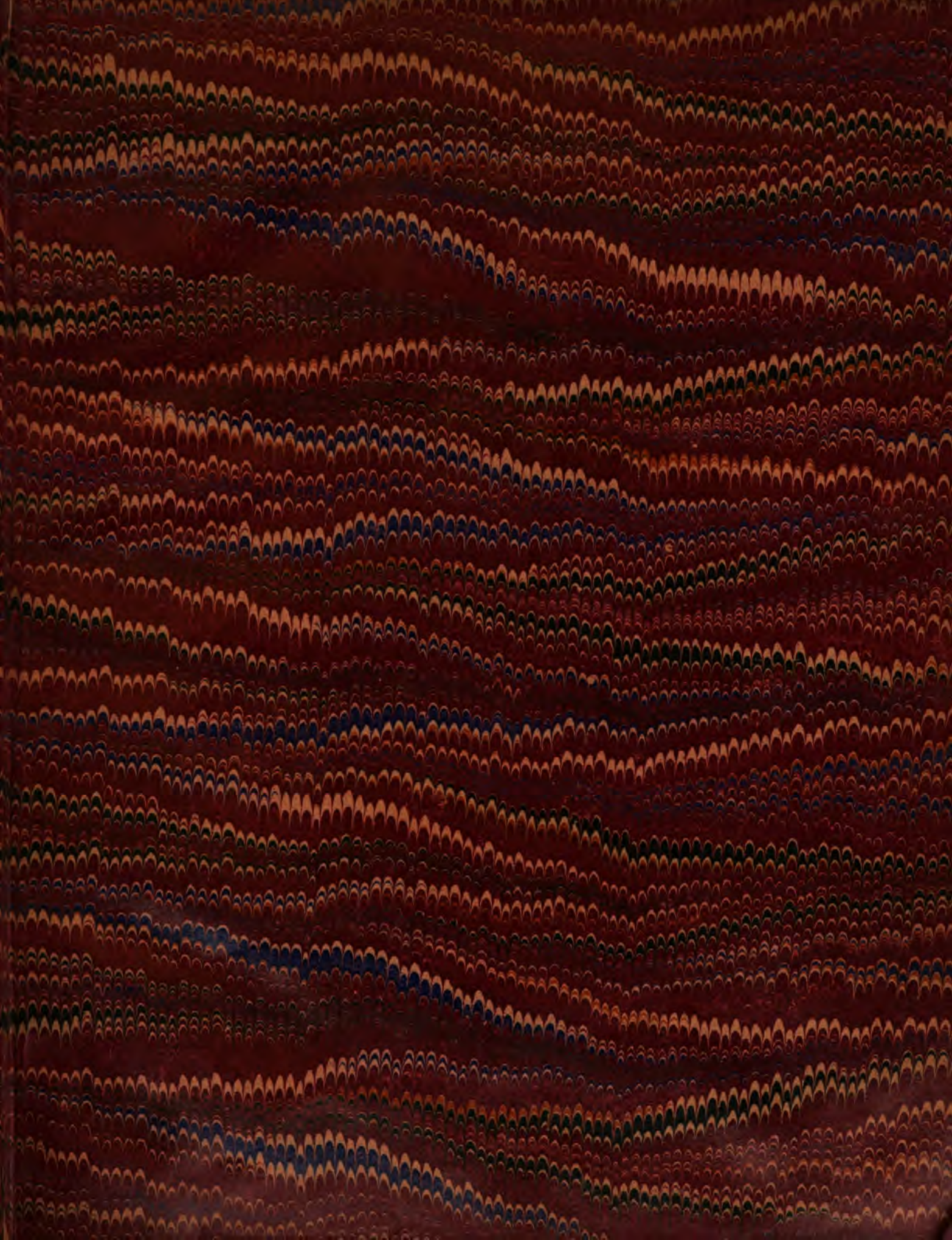
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DEANERY OF BICESTER.

PART VII.

HISTORY OF
FRITWELL AND SOULDERN.

HISTORY

OF

F R I T W E L L .

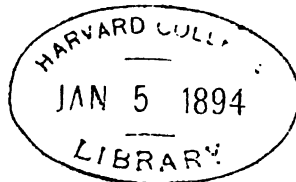
COMPILED BY

J. C. BLOMFIELD, M.A.,
Rector of Launton, and Rural Dean.

"Paupers we come into a world prepared
As for some regal guest ; prepared, arrayed,
With temples, shrines, and statues of the gods,
Cathedrals where unfaltering twilight dwells,
Subduing souls to sympathy and prayer :
Lakes, woods, and waterfalls, and cities girt
With walls majestic circling sumptuous tombs
Of sceptres superseded, thrones interred,
Prodigious pageant open to us all."
(Austin's Poems.)

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Hayes fund.

FERT-WELLE, FRET-WELLE, FRITWELL.

THE altitude of the ground on which the village of Fritwell stands, according to the Ordnance Survey taken in 1874, and as marked on the north-west corner of the church tower there, is 416·596 feet above the sea-level at Liverpool. On this high tableland of the great Oolite formation there are two streams flowing in opposite directions, though rising from the same source, which are tributaries of two of the chief rivers of England. One flows eastwards through Fritwell to Fringford, there become of sufficient volume to turn a mill, the first in its course, and thence into the main stream of the great Ouse. The other flows in an opposite direction towards Somerton, where, falling over a small cascade, it reaches the Cherwell, and then finds its way into the English Channel. The streamlet through Fritwell is sometimes claimed as the source of the river Ouse.

“Amongst the many small rivulets, perchance it may not be unworthy of notice that the “two considerable rivers of Stour and Ouse, though but small here, and running but little way in it, “yet rise in this county, the one at Swalcliff, which goes into the Severn sea in the West; and the “other at Fritwell, whence it runs into the sea between Lincolnshire, and Norfolk in the east of “England.”¹ But this is not an undisputed claim. In the parish of Farthingoe, in Northamptonshire, closely bordering on this county, there is a spring called Ousewell, or, as it is corruptly pronounced, Owzel, adjoining the turnpike road, at the foot of the hill descending eastward from the village, which is also said to be the source of the river Ouse. Thence the spring flows to Brackley :

“From Brackley breaking forth, through soiles most heavenly sweet,
“By Buckingham makes on, and, crossing Watling Street,
“Shee with her lesser Ouze at Newport next doth twin,
“Which from proud Chiltern neare, comes eas'ly ambling in.”²

There are “waters under the earth” as well as on its surface. Underground channels and caverns are hollowed out by the flowing waters, with the help of the carbonic acid gas which they contain. All rain-water which does not run to the ocean through rivers sinks into the ground, joins the waters there, and in time generally finds its way to the ocean. But the direction taken by the underground streams is much affected by the kind of soil they pass through. Loose, soft, gravelly, or sandy soils allow water free passage, but tough clay or hard rock act as barriers. Sometimes a large quantity of water will collect over one stratum of rock or clay and under another, unable to find an outlet. If the water has found its way there from a greater height, the pressure of other water trying to flow in from behind will force it to take advantage of any opening that may occur. These natural openings or outlets we call springs or wells, and such abound in this district.

On the edge of this upland, northwards and eastwards, the Romans formed two great roads, the Portway, and the branch road leading to and from it. The line of the former may still be traced in a grass lane which runs between Fritwell and Somerton, and that of the latter in the road leading from Souldern to Tusmore.³

¹ Plot's Natural History of Oxon, chap. II.

² Drayton's Poly Albion.

³ Early History of this Deanery, pp. 7, 12.

On the other side of this upland southwards, the British inhabitants of this district began in the VIth century to form their great line of defence against the invading Saxons. This took the usual form of a huge bank and ditch, stretching for many miles across the country. Traces of this embankment (called from its construction in some parts Wattlebank) are distinctly visible in Fritwell Lane, at the north-west corner of Ardley parish.¹

This embankment is supposed to have been utilized two centuries later, to form the boundary between the kingdoms of the Mercians and West Saxons. "After several successful attempts upon the kingdoms of Kent and Northumberland, king Offa did at last resolve to recover this county of Oxford from the West Saxon kings, and enlarge his Mercian kingdom to its antient limits, the banks of the Thames. Upon which in the year 775, or 778, or 779, he brought an army across the frontiers about Souldern or Fretwell in this county, where ran a branch of a Roman way, called now The Port-way, and in some parts Wattlebank, etc., and marched to Bennington or Bynsyntun," etc.²

Among the springs of this upland district, one hidden in the thick woodland attracted the attention of the early English settlers, and was named by them "*Fert-well*" or "*Fret-well*" ("will" or "well" being Anglo-Saxon terms for a natural spring). This spring is situated on the right hand side of the present road to Somerton, soon after passing the parish church, and has been long known as "The Town-well" or "The Spring" (the latter name being given on the Award map). A few years ago it was walled in, but the neighbours still draw water from it, its overflow supplying a pond close by. The first form of this place-name occurs twice in the Domesday Survey: "*Fertwelle*," "*Fertewelle*," and several suggestions have been made as to its etymology.

"*Fert*" or "*Fret*" are interchangeable forms of the same word, derived from "*fret*" or "*freten*," to corrode or eat away, this being a contracted form of "*for-eat*" and Germ. "*frett*" of "*ferret*." Hence this place-name may signify that the ground around the well, or at its mouth, was much broken and jagged.³

Frith als. *Frith* (in semi-Saxon *Frid*, in bad Latin *Fretum*) means a wood. In Reid's English Dictionary this word is said to be derived from the Welsh *Ffrith*, a woody place. Hence *Ffrithwell* may mean the woody well, the well in the wood. It appears that Dr. Rawlinson the scholar and antiquary, considered this to be the original name, for so he wrote it in his notes on this parish, and some confirmation of this conjecture may arise from the name commonly given to this village in late times, "Fritwell in the Elms."

Frey als. *Frea*, als. *Fro*, als. *Frode*, was the name of one of the most famous Northern gods presiding over rains, and sunshine, and all the fruits of the earth.⁴ "Among the victorious Germans, the northern heathenism existed in full strength. In many names of places, at the water springs, the water-sheds, in the designation of the days of the week, the names of the gods of Germany and of the North appear; the kings trace their descent directly from them, as their immediate ancestors; the Sagas and poems about them symbolize those balkes with the elements, the storm, the sea, and the powers of Nature, which are peculiarly characteristic of the northern mythology."⁵ The name of the god of fertility is adjectively used for fertility, and so *Frea-(t)-well* or *Frod-well* may mean the well sacred to the god of rain and fruits, the abundant well.

¹ Early History of this Deanery, p. 25.

² Kennett's P. A., chap. VII. He confuses the Roman road and the British embankment.

³ Early History of this Deanery, pp. 33, 34.

⁴ Mallett's Northern Antiquities.

⁵ Ranke's History of England, vol. I., p. 11 (Clarendon Press edition).

In comparatively modern times, according to the wise advice of Pope Gregory, an attempt was made to obliterate the memory of *Frea* or *Frode*, and an easy substitute was found in the present name.

A further obvious derivation is from *St. Frideswyde*, the patron saint of Oxford, and the subsequent connection of this parish with the priory dedicated to her seems to lend a ready sanction to such a suggestion. But there is no reason to suppose any connection of this spot with that saint before the XIIth century, and if any existed, the name is more likely to come from her mother *Safrida* than from herself.

Hence, whichever of these derivations we accept, it is clear that, in the early days of the English settlement, this well lay in the uninhabited parts of this district, quite separated from the "tons," and its more civilized parts.

It affords some clue to their habits of life that the majority of place-names among the Celts and Saxons are in some way connected with water. Our English forefathers disliked the life of cities, and lived in hamlets placed in forest clearings, or on the banks of forest streams and wells. Thus come the frequent terminations of "bourne," "well," "ley," "holt," and "clere." The IXth, or perhaps the Xth century, had probably passed away before any settlement was formed near the Fert-well. From the parish church being dedicated to St. Olave, we may further conjecture that the first settlers here were some wanderers who had been driven from their homes in this country during the period of the Danish invasions.

PLOUGHLEY HUNDRED.

On the edge of the high ground which bounds this district, within the limits of what now forms the parish of Fritwell, on a spot overlooking the wide valley of the river Cherwell and on the side of the Portway, visible from a long distance, a great mound was raised over the burial-place of some chief, either Briton or Roman. Some centuries later an Englishman of some distinction, named *Pokede* or *Pough*, was thought worthy of an honourable burial. So, according to the custom of those early times, the old tumulus was opened that the body of this great man might be laid within it. The tumulus from that time became known as *Pokede-la-waha*, or *Powede-lowe*, i.e., the burial-place of *Pokede* or *Pough*.¹ Five roads met at this spot, two Roman roads (the Portway and the branch through Tusmore) and three English trackways (from Bicester, Fritwell, and Somerton), and thus it became a convenient place of meeting to the inhabitants of this district. In order to protect themselves from invasion and wrong, the English colonists, soon after settling in this country, formed a plan of arranging themselves in companies of a hundred warriors. Each company was composed of picked champions, the representatives of a hundred families, men who were ready in case of war to uphold the honour of their house and to fight for their hearths and homes. These hundred families recognised a bond of union with each other, and ranged themselves under one name for general purposes, whether for defence, administration of justice, or other reasons. Once a month they held a meeting, called the Hundred-moot, which was attended by four men and the reeve from every township, and also by the eorls and ceorls of the district. At this meeting, as soon as their chieftain had dismounted from his horse and fixed his spear in the ground, each warrior touched the latter with his own spear in token of their compact, and pledged himself to mutual support. At this assembly also criminals were tried, disputes settled, bargains concluded, and when the English became Christians, and had learnt to write, many of their transactions in the Hundred courts were inserted in the chartularies of abbeys or registers of bishops.² It shows

¹ Early History of this Deanery, pp. 19-68.

² Our English Villages. See Early History of this Deanery, p. 44.

the wild state of the country at a late period, that the Hundred-moots gathered, not in villages, but at some barrow or den, at burn or ford, in comb or vale, in glade or woodland, here beside some huge boulder or stone, there on the line of a primeval foss-dyke, or beneath some mighty and sacred tree.¹ So here beside the old tumulus the freemen of this hundred assembled year after year, through many a century, to arrange and settle the business which affected their common interests. The name of this trysting-place assumed from time to time various forms, and was written *Ploughlegh*, *Poghedele*, *Ploughley*, the latter being that by which this Hundred is now known.

The old tumulus has been thrown down and the ground levelled. In the year 1845 some human bones were dug up by men digging stones near a mound on what may be supposed to have been the site of this tumulus. These were then removed and deposited in a small new mound formed of earth taken from the old tumulus, at a distance of about 50 yards from the spot where they were found.² At a short distance from the spot where Souldern turnpike gate once stood, on the left-hand side of the road leading from Souldern to Fritwell, there is now to be seen a semicircular mound, enclosed partly by the wall skirting the road, and partly by another wall attached for the purpose of confining the earth within its limits. This mound is about 6 feet high, and the radius of the semicircle is of about the same measurement. It stands partly in a garden at the back of the Bear Inn, and partly in the adjoining field. The high wall, which forms the base or diameter of the semicircle, conceals it from the view of passers along the road, but it can be plainly seen from the garden and field on the other side. It was with a feeling commanding sympathy that these remains of departed heroes were deposited, not in the level ground, but in a miniature mound raised for the purpose, and in the same earth in which they had at first been buried.

FRTWELL VILLAGE.

A peculiar feature in this village is that it is divided into two separate parts. In one part, near the Fertwell, was the original settlement. Here stand the church, the manor-house, and a few scattered houses of the better sort. The land belonging to this estate stretched northwards towards Souldern, and sideways eastwards and westwards. At some distance (the road turning round and becoming almost parallel) are the dwellings of the bulk of the population. Here a later settlement was formed, when some enterprising descendants of the first settlers stretched the cords of their habitation, and took in hand for cultivation the wild land lying southwards. The long, wide meadow which divides these two sections of the village was the freeboard between the two estates. They were remaining two separate estates in the Saxon period of our national history.³

After Duke William of Normandy had received the Crown of England from the hands of Archbishop Ealdred, amidst shouts of "Yea! Yea!" from his new English subjects, the kingdom seemed so tranquil that only a few months had passed after the battle of Senlac when King William, leaving England in charge of his brother Odo, Bishop of Baieux, whom he made Earl of Kent, and his minister, William Fitz-Osborn, whom he made Earl of Hereford, returned for awhile to Normandy. During his absence the Normans left behind in England oppressed the English, and were supported in their opposition by the two regents. In some parts the English rose in rebellion. In December, 1067, William returned, and, after putting down resistance in the

¹ Green's Conquest of England, chap. I. Until the last century there stood a pollard oak in the parish of Shelford, Berks, where the Hundred court used to be held.

² A native inhabitant of Fritwell, now an octogenarian, says that he remembers seeing some workmen covering in the bones,

which had been removed from the place where they had been found, within this mound.

³ Notes on Fritwell by Rev. P. Hookins, published by Oxfordshire Archæological Society.

south-eastern counties, set himself to conquer the rest of England. It is not to his victory at Senlac, but to the struggle which followed his return from Normandy, that King William owes his title of the "Conqueror." The completeness of the confiscation which followed is seen in the vast estates which the Conqueror was enabled to grant to his more powerful followers.¹ Two hundred manors in Kent, with an equal number elsewhere, rewarded the services of his brother Odo, and grants almost as large fell to the royal minister Fitz-Osborn. Among the estates given to these were the two manors at Fritwell.

The question here arises, Why did the Conqueror keep these two estates separate? Why did he not give them to one and the same person? And we see here an instance of his general policy in the government of his new dominions. His first object was to keep the English in subjection, but he was not afraid only of the English. He had good cause to fear lest the feudal army, which was to keep down the English, might be strong enough to be turned against himself, and that the barons (as the greater tenants in chief were usually called) might set him at naught, as Eadwine and Morkere had set Harold at naught, and as the Dukes of Normandy had set at naught the kings of France. To prevent this he adopted various contrivances. In the first place he abolished the great earldoms. There was never again to be an Earl of the West Saxons like Godwine, or an Earl of the Mercians like Leofric. In the next place he weakened the territorial authority of the barons. Even when he granted to one man estates so numerous that if they had been close together they would have extended at least over a whole county, he took care to scatter them over England, allowing only a few to be held by a single owner in any one county. If, therefore, a great baron took it into his head to levy war against the King, he would have to collect his vassals from the most distant counties, and his intentions would thus be known before they could be put in practice.² Thus, of the fifty estates in Oxfordshire which he gave to Bishop Odo, five only (Fringford, Finmere, Fritwell, Shelswell, Somerton), and of the twenty-eight estates in the same county which he gave to Earl William two only (Fritwell and Newton Purcel), lay near each other.

THE MOIETY GIVEN TO BISHOP ODO.

Bishop Odo's estate comprised the original village settlement, reaching from the manor-house to the boundaries of the parish towards Souldern. It consisted of about 545 acres, of which 320, more or less, were wild pasture; 213, more or less, were arable; and 12 meadow, reserved for hay. About 54 acres of this arable land were in the occupation of the absent lord, about 80 in that of tenants, while the rest had fallen out of cultivation. Six male adults were the resident workmen; namely, a slave, who lived and was maintained in the manor-house, and was continually employed on the demesne lands; four villeins, who did labour services, and held land in their own occupation; and one bordarer. No change or disturbance of any importance, except of ownership, took place between the reign of Edward the Confessor and the taking of the Great Survey, for the money value of the estate, £3 = £90 of modern value per annum, remained unchanged during that interval.

Land of the Bishop of Baieux.

"Rainald (or Wadard) holds six hides in *Fertwelle*. There is land to four ploughs. Now in "the demesne one plough with one bondman; and four villanes with one bordar have one plough "and a half. There are twelve acres of meadow. It was and is worth three pounds."

There was evidently a doubt in the compilers of the Domesday Book who was the sub-

¹ Green's History of the English People; Student's History of England, by S. R. Gardiner, vol. I.

² Student's History of England, by S. R. Gardiner, vol. I., 1891.

tenant of this manor. Wadard, the Norman warrior, is mentioned as holding several manors in Oxfordshire belonging to the Bishop of Baieux, but as the other manor in this parish was undoubtedly held by Rainald, a question seems to have arisen whether the same person may not have been the sub-tenant of both manors. This question cannot now be decided. But a further question arises, Who was Rainald? Rainaldus Canutus is mentioned as holding land at Chippenham (Domesday, Wilts, p. 73 a). Rodborne Cheney is mentioned (*ibid.*, p. 71 b) as held by Rainaldus under Milo Crispin, and the Exon Domesday (Jones's "Wiltshire," p. 163) further defines him to be Rainaldus Canutus. It is a fair inference, therefore, that Canutus and Cheney are the same person, and that other like-named places, Barford Cheney, Middleton Cheney, etc. have some connection with him. Several instances also occur in Domesday in which land held by Rainaldus passes to a family of the name of Foliot, as *e.g.*, at Chilton Foliot, and Drayton Foliot in Wilts, at Albury, Noke, Winnal, Rousham, and in this parish of Fritwell in Oxon. We may therefore be nearly certain that the sub-tenant of this manor was Rainald Canutus al' Cheney, but who he was more than a tenant of several manors, chiefly under Milo Crispin, and whether or not he was the same person as was an Abbot of Abingdon, we cannot exactly know.¹

After Bishop Odo's banishment from England by King William II. this, like his other estates in this district, passed to the trusty knight William de Arsic, and to the barons, his descendants, and from them to the Barons de Grey of Rotherfield, in the course of the XIth, XIIth, XIIIth, and XIVth centuries, who successively became the superior feudal lords of it.

The inferior lords in possession were for a long time members of the family of Pipard, the same as held the adjoining manor of Somerton. The first known owner of this manor was

Gilbert Pipard.

"A.D. 1187. The warden or steward of the honour of Wallingford accounted to the king "for several sums in money granted to Gilbert Basset, Ranulph de Glanvil, Gilbert Pipard, Alan "Basset, Robert de Witefelde, and William Paganell."²

In succession came :

Nicholas Pipard,

Ralph Pipard,

who was in possession of this manor in Henry III.'s reign.

"*Fretewell.* The lord Ralph, son of Nicholas, holds half a fee in the village of Fretewell "of the heirs of Robert Arsich by the service of iiij^s, and iiij men, and they come twice a year to "the Hundred, and the Sheriff receives yearly of the view ij^s.

"Of the chief articles of enquiry they know nothing except of the default of the lord Ralph, "son of Nicholas."

During the turbulent reign of Henry III. the Crown revenues had been much diminished by the tenants in capite alienating lands without license, and withholding their dues, and by powerful ecclesiastics and laymen usurping the rights of holding courts, and committing other encroachments. The people, too, had been greatly oppressed by exactions at the hands of sheriffs and other officers, and by false claims to free-warren and illegal tolls. One of the first acts of Edward I., on his return from the Holy Land after his father's death, was to remedy these abuses. For this purpose he appointed special commissioners for inquiring into these grievances throughout the realm. From the inquisitions taken in pursuance of this commission, it appears that Ralph

¹ In the History of Somerton it was conjectured that Rainald, the sub-tenant of that manor, was the Abbot of Abingdon, but the writer was not then aware of the many notices of Rainaldus

Canutus which Mr. Mowat has put together in his Notes on Domesday.

² Kennett, P. A.

Pipard's estate had been largely reduced, being there described as a fourth part of, instead of half, a knight's fee.

"Ralph Pipard holds in the village of Fretewell ij hydes of land in his demesne of Robert de Grey, and Robert de Grey holds of the lord of the king in capite, and he will give scutage to Robert de Grey by the 4th part of a knight's fee."

"A.D. 1272. Hundredum de Pokkedelowe, Fretwell. Ralph son of Nicholas holds in the same a fourth part of a knight's fee of the fee of Arsik."¹

The dependants are there severally described :

"Of Villeins.

"William de Bigc̃hull holds j virgate of land of the said Ralph Pipard in villeinage by iiij^s yearly, and he will work, and pay tallage at the will of the lord, and redeem his sons at the will of the lord.

"Laurence Gustartard holds j virgate of the same in the same way. Margaret, the widow, etc.; Iveta, the widow, etc.

"Richard at the well, etc. Peter Helfoweld holds j virgate of land in villeinage by vj^s yearly, and he will work, etc.

"Adam Reynayd holds j virgate of the same in the same way. Richard Brond, etc.; Richard Mey, etc.; Richard le Hert, etc.; Walter Finrat, etc.; Richard le Garden, etc.; William, Stephen's son, Matilda, the widow, etc.

"And they owe suit of the Hundred twice yearly with iiij men, and to the lord the king.

"Of Cottagers.

"Agnes Bogenis holds ij acres of land of the same by ij^s yearly.

"Cecilia de Asfedihe holds ij acres, etc.

"Of Freeman.

"The Rector of the Church of Sulthorn holds of the same fee j hyde of land, which was formerly given to the Church of Sulthorn in pure and perpetual alms.

"John de Ledwell holds ij virgates of land of the same by xij^s yearly, and gives suit twice of the Hundred and twice of the County.

"John, Guydon's son, holds j virgate of land, and pasture as much as belongs to iiij hydes of land.

"John de Ledwell holds j virgate of land of John, Guidon's son, by v^s yearly."

"And Ralph Pipard's men ought to come to two views of Frankpledge with iiij born serving men, and with all their freeholders; and all the freeholders ought to come to the County of Oxford Court twice a year."

1299. Ralph Pipard summoned to Parliament from 6 Feb., 27 Edw. I., 1299, to 24 July, 30 Edw. I., 1302; he was likewise summoned 26 Jan., 25 Edw. I., 1297. But it is very doubtful if that writ can be deemed a regular summons to Parliament.

Ralph Pipard died in 1309, and the following inquisition, taken after his death, shows some of the changes which had taken place in this estate in the course of two centuries :

"Ralph Pipard, deceased. Writ dated 21 Oct. 3 E. II."

"Oxon.—Inquisition made at Rutherford, 10 Nov. 3 Edw. II. Fretewell.—He held in his demesne as of fee certain tenements in Fretewelle of Joan de Grey by the service of half a

¹ Testa de Neville.

"knight's fee. There is there one Messuage worth yearly 12^d, 80^a arable land worth yearly 20^s (3^d per acre), 1^a meadow, 18^d. Rent of assize of one free tenant, 20^s. Rent of customars there, 60^s; rent of one cotter, 2^s 2^d. The said customars shall reap in autumn the Lord's corn for 6 days, and those works are worth 8^s. They give of tallage at Christmas 30^s. The pleas and perquisites of the Court are worth yearly 2^s.

"John Pippard, son and heir; æt. 36.

Total 7^l 4^s 8^d."

John Pipard.

Neither he nor any of his descendants were summoned to Parliament, and Dugdale gives no account of any of them. John Pipard was living in 1324, for in that year he proposed some change in his property here, and at Somerton, which led to an official inquiry whether it might be effected without damage to the King or any of his subjects.¹ There is mention some years later of *Sir W. Pipard*, whose daughter married one of the Warine de L'Isles, who were lords of the other moiety of this village.

An interval of near two centuries here occurs before this estate is found in other hands.

In the Patent Rolls of 5 Hen. VIII. (1514) there is a "grant to Walter Harper and William Holme of the Manor of Frutewell, Oxon, which Sir Robert Spencer held for life." It refers to a previous grant in 3 Hen. VIII. to Harper of two tenements in Frutewell.

Some years later this manor and the advowson of the church were purchased by *Lord Edward Manners*, third Earl of Rutland.

This purchase led to an important change. Towards the end of the XVth, and in the first half of the XVIth century, many landowners began to avail themselves of the permission, granted by the Statute of Merton, 1235-6, to enclose parts of the waste lands of their manors over which the free and villein tenants had rights of pasturage and turbary. Differences then arose between the lord and his tenants, and discontent became general. Sir Thomas More speaks in indignant tones of "noblemen and gentlemen, yea and certain abbots, who leave no ground for tillage; they enclose all into pastures; they throw down houses; they pluck down towns, and leave nothing standing, but only the Church to be made a sheep-house." The preachers of a later day, Latimer, Gilpin, Lever, and others, inveigh as strongly against the excessive change of arable into pasture ground. The Earl of Rutland followed the spirit of the times, and prepared to effect a like change in this distant part of his property, thereby removing some cottages, and lessening the number of labourers employed on it. This at once led to the following remonstrance:

"To the Earl of Rutland in London or elsewhere,

"Right honorable and very good lord,

"Apon the yernest request, and petifull estate of a number of poore men in fritwell in the county of Oxford of late warned out of their housses and livinge by o^r to their uttar undoinge onles they receve aied at y^r honor's hande, wee whoos names are underwritten, as heretofore wee have by lettars byn (?sutars) to y^r honor in their beharlffes, that throughe y^r helpe they might be garded ffrom this their imminent overthrowe, as also o^r poore creditte forbede ffrom liberall (?speche) here in the countrey to no smale reproche, againe wee are stirred to make our hūble request that yt wold please y^r honor for charetie's sake to helpe the (?delivñc) of thees poore men from thees perils present, whoo's good willis wee must nede affirme with trothe, never wanted in time of striffe, for the land, to funder y^r title. Wherefore yff it may please y^r honor to have care hereof that they may eithar purchesse the land thoughe yt cost them more by

¹ History of Somerton, p. 97.

"one hundred ponde than y^r l. had, or for some small portion their (?benfet) and estate may be
 "confirmed and ratefied beside that ye shall doo a dede muche pleasinge to vs, y^r honor shall more
 " (?enable) us here aftar yss ocasion (?serve) to do youre pleasure in the like, whereunto ye shall
 " find us willinge, as heretofore wee have not been unredy. So withe our hüble comendation wee
 " take our leve, beshechinge GOD to send youre long liffe withe muche encrease of honor, the first
 " of October, 1571.

" Y^r honors hüble to co^mmand,

" WILLIAM BABINGTON,

" HERCULES RAYNSFORD."¹

The grievance thus complained of was probably unredressed, and this accounts for the absence of labourers' cottages in the neighbourhood of the Manor House at the present time.

The tenants in occupation of this manor at this time were probably the following :

Mr. Benjamin Gouson al^s Goūston.

" 1575 Anthony the son of Mr. Benjamin Goūston was baptized the 29 of July anno † dicto."²
 Soon afterwards Mr. Gouston died, and his widow married

Mr. William Andrews.

" 1578. Florence the daughter of Mr. William Andrews and Jane his wife was baptized the
 " 12 of October."²

Four other children were baptized at Fritwell in 1580-81-82-83.

" Burialles, Anno Dñi, 1584."

" The 12th of January William Andrews, 1584."²

Mr. Gouson before his marriage in 1574 had settled his estate at Fritwell on his intended wife. A dispute about the possession of the settlement deeds afterwards arose.

Proceedings in Chancery in Reign of Queen Elizabeth.³

A a, 6-7.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Plaintiff.</i>	<i>Defendant.</i>	<i>Object of suit.</i>	<i>Premises.</i>
65	William Andrews and Jane his wife	Anthony Gouson alias Gouston	Deeds, evidences, &c.	Manor of Frytwell, &c., in co. Oxon, of which Benjamin Gouson al ^s Gouston, deceased was seised, who about the 16 th of the Queen's reign in con- sideration of a marriage between him and Jane, now wife of com- plainant, and for perfecting her jointure, granted the same to John Edmond of Dadington co. Oxon, and others, and their heirs, &c. (reciting the marriage settlement), the reversion of the premises being on the defendant, the brother and heir of Ben- jamin G., who having the title deeds made secret conveyance, &c. Ano. 1584

¹ The writing in this petition is unusually crabbed, some words defying all attempts at deciphering, being evidently the composition of uneducated men. It is preserved among the MSS. in the

possession of the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir Castle. See Hist. Commissioners' Report.

² Fritwell Register,

³ Vol. I., p. 22.

The Earl of Rutland sold his estate here to
Edward Yorke, gentleman,
 who was in possession of it before the year 1575. There was some difficulty about the title.

Proceedings in Chancery in Reign of Q. Elizabeth.¹

Y, 7, I.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Plaintiff.</i>	<i>Defendant.</i>	<i>Object of the suit and Premises.</i>
32	Edward Yorke Eliz.	37 Sir Anthony Cope, and Sir Richard Fenys Knights	To protect title by purchase. The manor of Frutewell, alias Fritwell in Frutewell, formerly the inheritance of Edward Manners, Earl of Rutland and since by divers mesnes conveyances vested in the plaintiff

Mr. Yorke was probably a member of the family of that name then resident in Fritwell and the neighbourhood.

"Mr. George York, Gent., of Brockley" had purchased the right of presentation to this vicarage, and had exercised it in 1566, and in the Fritwell Registers there is mention of "Mr. Thomas Yorke" in 1580, and "Mr. Philipp Yorke" in 1612. This family held a place in that order of country gentlemen, which is often said to date from the reign of Queen Elizabeth. This order was largely recruited from the numerous landowners, who were not holders of knights' fees, or even designated as Squires. These were the "crestless yeomen" of Shakespeare, and it seems probable that between the accession of Henry VII. and the accession of Charles I. many of this class had acquired sufficient property and importance to become absorbed into the ranks of the gentry, some of whom held positions of high trust and authority among the English Cavaliers.²

"Weddings, 1584."

"Mr. Edward Yorke, and Mrs. Margaret Lyght were married the 16th of September."³

He was then resident in Fritwell, but a few years later he left the village. In 1609 he is described as residing at Frankton in Warwickshire, where he died and was buried.

"1613. 25 Januarii Edwardus Yorke sepultus, senescens."⁴

He was followed by his son of the same name,

Edward Yorke, Esq (1613—?).

He has left a lasting mark of his residence in the village. The dwelling-house attached to this manor was as late as 1309 described as "a messuage worth yearly 12^d," and though in the three centuries following it must have been enlarged and improved, it probably remained an unsuitable residence for the lord of this manor, especially in an age of increasing luxury. Immediately therefore after coming into possession of his patrimony, Mr. Yorke built the present Manor House in an age when a great advance was made in house-building, and in domestic furniture and comforts.

THE MANOR HOUSE.

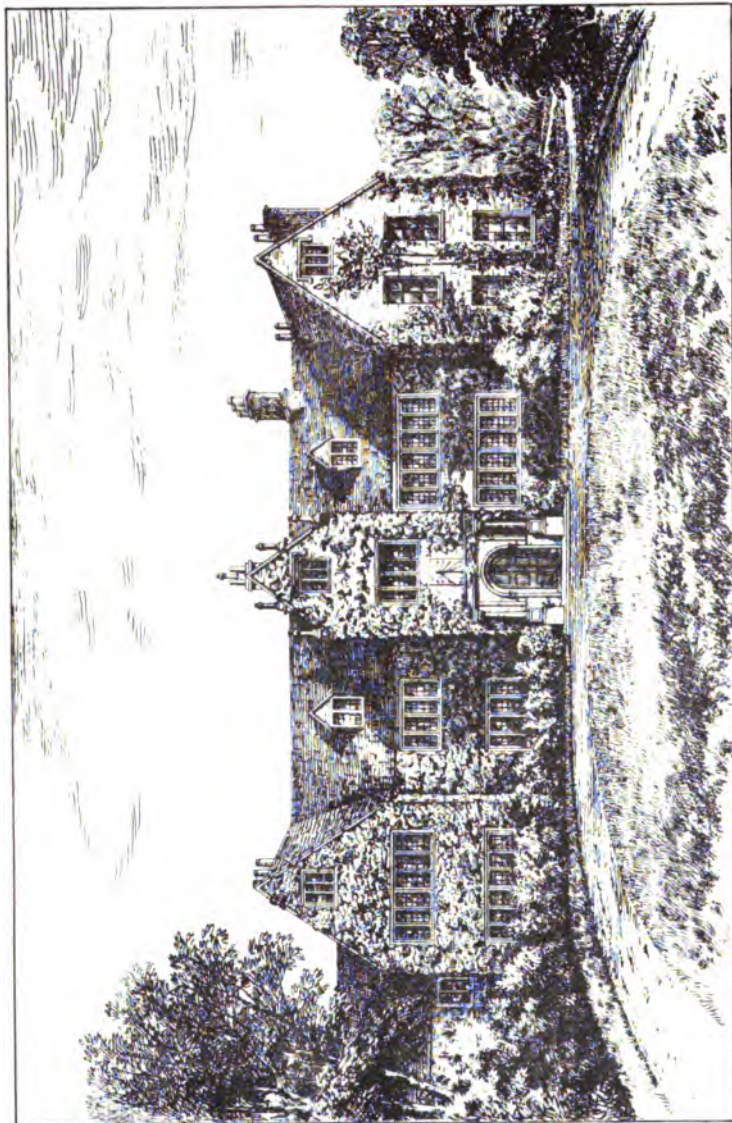
This house, built in the shape of E, is a handsome manorial residence, a good specimen of late domestic architecture of the time of King James I. The date 1619, and the initial letters E. Y.

¹ Vol. III., p. 32.

² English Country Life, by T. E. Kebbel, 1891.

³ Fritwell Register.

⁴ Frankton Church Register.



W. W. Law & Sons, Photo. Hils, Northampton

MANOR HOUSE, FRITWELL, OXON.

are carved over the fireplace in the drawing-room. This house still remains much as it was when its founder entered by its open porch, or sat by its handsome fireplace.

After Mr. Yorke's death this estate, together with the advowson, were sold to

Samuel Sandys, Esq.,

who was resident in the Manor House before the year 1639, for in that year a child of his was baptized in the Parish Church.¹ In the great strife of that time he adhered to the King's side, and came under the suspicion of the Parliament.

"1651. May 19. Whereas Colonel Samuel Sandys was by order of Council not to depart "out of the limits of Oxfordshire without special license and was not to go into Worcestershire, "Council thereby intends that he shall not go out of Oxfordshire without special occasion to be "made known to, and approved by four justices of peace of that county, and then he may not go "into Worcestershire."²

After the restoration of the monarchy he evidenced his thankfulness by a gift to the Parish Church in 1661, and by presenting a clergyman in the place of the late intruder in the same year. He died soon afterwards, and his property in this village was sold to

Sir Samuel Danvers,

a descendant of the family of Danvers of Culthorp, or Culworth, near Banbury, and of Upton in Warwickshire.³ He was residing at Culthorp during the Civil War, where he received King Charles for one night just before the battle of Cropredy Bridge.

"1644. On the next day being Thursday, the 27th June, the King proceeded to Culworth, "seven miles from Banbury, where he rested that night at the house of Sir Samuel Danvers."

Like other Royalists he became impoverished, and after a while removed from the old family seat at Culworth to the smaller house at Fritwell. While resident here a connection of his family,⁴ Mr. Robert Marsham of Bushy Hall, Herts, paid him a visit, and was witness of a drunken brawl, and consequent duel in the year 1665.⁵

"The ninth of September I going to Fritwell to visitt Sr Samuell Danvers, he carried me to "an Ale-house, and after some time wanting company sent for one Mr. Jackman, who came to us "and immediately after him Mr. Pope Danuers who had been enquiring before for me. After wee "had all drunk too freely Mr. Danuers begun a whole flaggon which every one pledged, and then "began two flaggons in a hand which every one refused but Mr. Jackman. When Mr. Jackmans "flaggons were filled. Mr. Danuers denying that they were soe full as his Mr. Jackman gaue him "the lye where upon Mr. Danuers struck him and they fought. I parted them twice in the house "—afterwards they went out of doores, I followed them, but coming into the aire I doe not well "remember what happened afterwards. The witnesses sweare that they were down one on the top "of another, and that I was standing by with my sword drawne. Afterwards I went home with Sr "Samuell and his son. The next morning being the tenth Mr. Danuers hauing been very ill, "desired me to goe out with him to take the aire, I knowing nothing of any other designe went "along with him into the common feild where I saw foure or five men walking together, and att "some distance foure more whereof one was Mr. Jackman. I not suspecting anything of a duell in "the presence of so many men, went to talk with some of the men. In the interim Mr. Jackman

¹ Another child was baptized at Fritwell in 1641.

² State Papers, 1651, p. 207: Council of State.

³ Pedigree of Danvers is given in *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica*, vol. I.

⁴ Sir John Marsham, his brother, had married Anne Danvers.

⁵ State Papers, Domestic, Chas. II., vol. CXXXIII., No. 90, preserved in the Record Office.

"and Mr. Danuers met and fought with their swords, and after three or foure brisk passes before
 "that wee could come to part them Mr. Jackman fell down dead. After which I went about my
 "affaires, and staid three or four dayes in the country without any disturbance and then came away
 "The Coroners inquest haue found it willfull murder in Mr. Danuers¹ but find nothing concerning
 "me.

"ROBT. MARSHAM."²

Samuel Cox, Esq.,

of Farningham in Kent, purchased this manor of Sir Samuel Danvers, but being a Roman Catholic he did not purchase the advowson. After his marriage with Alice Kilby, of Souldern,³ in 1704, he came to reside in the Manor House. Two years later a return was made to Parliament of all persons who refused to attend the services of the Parish Church, when the curate in charge of this parish, J. Aldridge, presented as recusants :

Samuel Cox, gentleman.
 Alice, his wife.
 Frances Fleming, servant.
 William Hoare.

Catherine Hoare, his wife.
 Margaret Robins.
 Edward Perkins, malster.
 Elizabeth Collet.

Mr. Cox died in 1712. His widow then returned to her father's house at Souldern, and the house at Fritwell was let to

Sir Edward Longueville, Bart.

He was a descendant of the family of that name who possessed the manor of Wolverton, Bucks. Having sold that estate for the relief of James II. (in whose cause also Gabriel Cox, of Farningham, was a great sufferer), he came to Fritwell. A sad story has been handed down in connection with his residence here. Over the drawing-room in the Manor House there was a long attic, at the end of which was a very narrow cupboard, fitted with shelves, to all appearance like an ordinary cupboard, which remained until a few years ago. After pulling the shelves forward the whole back came with them, and thus opened a passage just wide enough for an adult person to squeeze through, under the beams of the roof, into a small room beyond. In the corner of this inner room was a smaller apartment, partitioned off with lath and plaster, about eight feet by four or five feet, into which access was given by a low and small opening, and in which there was no window, but only a small fireplace, which had been much used, judging from the burnt and blackened chimney-back.⁴ These rooms were probably intended as the hiding-place of a Roman priest in the days of sudden visits of pursuivants and persecution. But the tradition is that they were the scene of a horrible tragedy. It is said that there were two brothers of the Longueville family resident in this house, that the younger of them here imprisoned the elder, on the ground of his being a lunatic, and kept him in close confinement for fourteen years, until he was ultimately starved to death. Sir G. Longueville met his death by a fall from his horse at Bicester races, on August 19th, 1718. "Sir Edward Longueville was buried
 "August 26th, 1718."⁵

After the death of Mrs. Cox, in 1729, the manor estate was again sold and became the property of the Wakes, a family long settled at Courtern Hall and Blisworth, in Northamptonshire. It

¹ Mr., afterwards Sir, Pope Danvers, died in 1712. He did not therefore receive capital punishment.

² The baronetcy descended to this Robert Marsham, on the death of his nephew, a minor, in 1696, and from him the present Earl of Romney derives.

³ History of Souldern.

⁴ Thus described in 1852, by Mrs. Stapleton.

⁵ Fritwell Church Register.

appears that at Sir Samuel Danver's sale of his property here, the advowson of the Parish Church had been sold separately from the manor, and that this had been then purchased by trustees in behalf of the Wake family, for in 1690 Robert Wake was presented to the vicarage. This purchase of the advowson probably led to the subsequent purchase of the manor, as soon as an opportunity was offered.

Sir Baldwin Wake, Bart.,

about the year 1730, came to reside in the Manor House. Another sad story is told of this time. In 1735 Sir Baldwin and his two sons, *Baldwin* and *Charles*, were playing at cards very late one night, when a quarrel arose, in which the father struck his eldest son with a blow so heavy that the latter fell on his temple against the panelled wainscot of the room. There he lay motionless; all attempts to rouse him proved unavailing, and death was said to have been instantaneous. Horror-struck Sir *Baldwin* was about to awaken the sleeping household, when his younger son, *Charles*, at once proposed to leave the house and to take on himself the suspicion of having caused his brother's death. This proposal was silently acquiesced in, and the father and son then carried the dead body into an empty and unused room in the attics. In the morning it was conjectured that the brothers, according to their frequent custom, had gone off together on some sporting expedition. Nothing was, therefore, thought of their absence till about ten days after the event, when the body was discovered and then buried.

"Squire Baldwin Wake, buried March 17, 1734"¹

Suspicion at once fell in the direction intended, and every possible attempt was made to search for *Charles* and to apprehend him, but in vain. Twelve years later Sir *Baldwin* was dying, and in his last moments he confessed that he had caused his son's death, and revealed the name which his son *Charles* had assumed. The latter had enlisted as a private soldier in a line regiment, and at the time of his father's death was stationed at *Alexandria*, in Egypt. When tidings reached him that his innocency was established he at once returned to England.

"Sir Baldwin Wake, buried July 29, 1747."¹

Mr. *Charles Wake*, soon after his father's death, came into the possession of considerable property in Essex and elsewhere. His brother *Baldwin's* son succeeded to the baronetcy.

From this time the Manor House gained an ill name.

"What! a haunted apartment, I suppose?"

"To be sure, to be sure—every mansion in this country of the slightest antiquity has its "ghosts and its haunted chamber, and you must not suppose us worse than our neighbours. They "are going, indeed, somewhat out of fashion. I have seen the day when if you had doubted the "reality of a ghost in an old manor-house you run the risk of being made a ghost yourself, "as Hamlet says."²

The property at Fritwell continued in the Wake family until the end of the last century, when it was sold to

John Freke Willes, Esq.,

of Astrop, Northamptonshire, High Sheriff of that county in 1790.

His sister Frances was married at St. George's, Hanover Square, London, to Henry Fermor, Esq., brother of William Fermor, Esq., of Tusmore, on June 8, 1784. They subsequently resided in the Manor House at Fritwell. Mr. Willes improved the surroundings of the Manor House by enclosing some waste ground which lay in front of it near Church Lane, and planting it with the trees which are still flourishing on it. But he gained no good-will by what was supposed to be an

¹ Fritwell Church Register.

Sir Walter Scott's *The Antiquary*, vol. I., chap. IX.

encroachment on public rights. He died January 22, 1802, leaving his estates at Astrop, King's Sutton, and Fritwell to his cousin.

The Rev. William Skippen Willes, Ob. Oct. 19, 1822, leaving two sons:—

John William Willes, Esq., Ob. 1826.

William Willes, Esq., Ob. 1865.

From 1840 to 1845 some members of this family were resident in the Manor House, but for many years it was let. One of the occupants of it was Captain Barclay, the well-known amateur pedestrian, who came to reside here shortly after his celebrated walking feat of 1,000 miles in 1,000 consecutive hours at Newmarket in 1811. He came here to join the Bicester Hunt, and, while resident, he caused a great sensation in the village by bringing down two notable prize-fighters, Cribb and Molineux, men of colour. During their visit it was the favourite pastime of the Captain to call in some of the stalwart men of the parish to try a bout with the "darkies." The pugilistic encounters took place chiefly in the hall of the house, and Sunday afternoons were the chosen times for assembling the village champions. Two daughters were born to Captain Barclay at Fritwell, the elder of whom in 1877 claimed through her father the Earldom of Airth, in the Scottish peerage, in a case tried before the House of Lords.

Another tenant in more recent times was Mrs. Palmer, widow of the Rev. W. J. Palmer, Rector of Mixbury. Several other persons after her decease hired the house for short periods, and occupied it during the hunting season.

In 1863 Mr. Willes sold this estate. Mr. Berridge purchased the Manor House and the chief part of the land, on which he subsequently built the present Inkerman farm-house.

Mr. York, of Plymouth, Devon, purchased the advowson of the Parish Church, and in the same year obtained from Mr. Berridge his recent purchase of the Manor House. Mr. York then presented his son to the Vicarage, vacant that year, and gave him the Manor House as his residence.

In 1876 the advowson and the Manor House thus brought together were sold to the Rev. *Reginald Remington*, the present owner.

The Manor House is now let on a repairing lease to Mr. Garner, an architect of reputation, who, in this current year, is carrying out extensive repairs and alterations. Among the latter is the removal of a great part of the floor of the old attic on the east side in order to increase the height of the lower rooms, and thus disappears the scene of the Longueville tragedy.

THE MOIETY GIVEN TO EARL WILLIAM.

The estate given by the Norman Conqueror to Earl William Fitz-Osborn, comprised the later settlement southwards towards Fewcott and Ardley. It was nearly double in size and fully double in value of that given to Bishop Odo. It consisted of about 535 acres of wild pasture, 426 acres of arable land, and 20 acres of meadow, making a total of 981 acres more or less. It was nearly equally divided between the lord and his tenants. The land held by the former in his own occupation, amounted to 319 acres of wild pasture, and 107 acres of arable land, and was cultivated by the regular daily labour of two slaves, and the occasional labour services of eight villein tenants. These latter held about 212 acres of arable land, in the proportion of about twenty-five acres each, with the same quantity of wild pasture for the feed of their oxen and other cattle. Beside the villeins, there were six bordars or cottagers resident on, and belonging to, this estate. This estate was depreciated in value after the Norman Conquest, being reduced from £210 (modern money value) in Edward the Confessor's time to £180 of modern value, at the taking of the great Survey.

Earl William died abroad in 1070, when the Earldom of Hereford, and all his lands in England passed to his third son, Roger de Britolio, who was condemned to imprisonment and the loss of his possessions for rebellion. His lands then seem to have been retained in the King's hands, and let out to farm, and are therefore described in the Domesday Survey, as of Earl William's fee.

THE LANDS BELOW ARE OF THE FEE OF EARL WILLIAM.

"Rainald holds *Fertewelle*. There are ten hides there. Land to eight ploughs. Now in the demesne two ploughs, and two bondmen; and eight villanes with six bordars have four ploughs. There are twenty acres of meadow. Of this land six hides are in the demesne. It was worth seven pounds; now six pounds."

This moiety was early granted to the Lords de L'Isle. Of this name there are several families, one taking that denomination from the Isle of Ely, the other from the Isle of Wight. It was a branch of the latter family, who became the feudal lords of the estate at Fritwell, descended from the family of De Ripariis, or Redvers, to whose well-known ancestor Richard (who died in 1137), Henry 1st gave the Isle of Wight.¹

The first tenants of this moiety under these feudal lords, were members of the family of *Foliot*, a noble race, directly descended from Rollo the Dane, who in A.D. 911 wrung Normandy from Charles the Simple. This family had been settled in England from the Norman Conquest, and was related to the Earls of Hereford. The most famous member of it was Gilbert Foliot, Bishop successively of Hereford and London, who died in 1187. A Robert Foliot, a near kinsman of the Bishop's, was a man of considerable learning, and by Becket's influence was made Archdeacon of Oxford about the year 1151. This Robert may have been the member of this family who is first mentioned as the tenant in occupation of this manor.

(1) *Robert Foliot*, who in 1160, gave the advowson of the Parish Church to St. Frideswide's Priory.

(2) *Ralph Foliot*, who in 1180 confirmed his father's gift. *Ob.* 1204.

(3) *Henry Foliot*, who in 1219 finally conveyed the advowson.

(4) *Sampson Foliot*.

High Sheriff for Oxfordshire and Berkshire, during three parts of the year 1252.

Appointed Governor of Oxford Castle in the same year. By Edward I., he was appointed one of the King's Justices, and in the 7th year of his reign, one of the Commissioners of Enquiry, into the tenure of lands in Oxfordshire. He held of Lord de L'Isle the manor of Noke in this neighbourhood, and lands in Adderbury. In the returns from the hundreds in Henry III.'s reign, he is described as in possession of Fritwell.

"And the lord Samson Foliot holds in the same village viij hides of land of the Earl de L'Isle, and he does suit of the Hundred, and he gives yearly for hidage viij^s, and of the view ij^s."

He was living in 1272, for in the Hundred Rolls of that year he was returned as holding half of the lordship of Noke.² He must have died in that year, or have given up the estate at Fritwell, for the latter is then described as belonging to

(5) *Roger Foliot*.

"1272 Hundredum de Pokkedelowe. Fretwell, Roger Foliot holds in the same one knight's fee of the same Earl de L'Isle.

¹ History of Upper Heyford, pp. 2-6.

² Owe. Sampson Foliot ten medietat. ville de Owe de Cou itissa de Insula, etc. (Hund. Rolls, Edw. I.).

“Lawrence de Broc holds in the same, half a knight’s fee of Roger Folioht (*sic*) and the same “Roger of the Earl de L’Isle.”¹

(6) *Ralph Foliot.*

“*Fretewell.* Ralph Foliot holds half of the village of Fretewell by the gift of Samson Foliot, “and the same Sampson of the Countess of Wite for one and a half knight’s fee, and the same “Countess by the gift of the King in *capite*, and he holds in the demesne two carucates of land, and “owes suit at the County of Oxford monthly, and at the Hundred of the lord the King every three “weeks, and he will give hydage viij^s yearly, and at the view of Frankpledge ij^s.

“Of Bondmen.

“*Philip de Oppercroft* holds j virgate of land of the aforesaid, Ralph Foliot in villeinage by “vj^s yearly, and he will pay tallage, and work at the will of the lord, and redeem his sons at the “will of the lord.

“*William Witlohe* holds one virgate of land, of the same in the same way, *Walter Starligge*, etc.; “*Alan Bokeman*, etc.; *Philip de March*, etc.; *Thomas de Gardiner*, etc.; *Margaret* the widow, etc.; “*William Sibels*, etc.; *Thomas in Angto*, etc.; *John Vincent*, etc.; *Roger in Angulo*; *Thomas le Man*, “etc.; *Agnes* the widow, etc.; *Robert Carter*, etc.

“Of Cottagers.

“*John Mūdewell* holds ij acres of land of the same Ralph, by iiij^s yearly for all services.

“*Stephen de Rok* holds of the same ij acres of land, by iiij^s yearly for all services.

“*Roger de Covinte* holds of, etc.; ij acres, etc.

“Of Freemen.

“*Philip Steward* holds ij virgates of land of the same Ralph Foliot by ix^s yearly, and owes “suit of the Hundred of Polid’ every three weeks, and at the County of Oxford twice yearly.

“*Thomas Wetōd* holds j virgate of land of the same by ij^s yearly, and owes suit, etc.

“*Thomas Silvester* holds ix acres, etc.; by iiij^s yearly, etc.

“*John de Haylward* holds ij acres of the same by ij^s yearly for all services.

“*Agnes Nobelot* holds iiij $\frac{1}{2}$ acres, etc.; by j^s yearly.

“*John Enfayl* holds ij $\frac{1}{2}$ acres, etc.; by xij^s yearly.

“*The Prior of St. Frideswide* holds j $\frac{1}{2}$ virgate of land of the fee of Ralph Foliot, and he owes “scutage when it occurs ij^s.”

At the beginning of the XIIIth Century, or perhaps a little earlier, this manor was assigned to *Henry de Tyeys* or *Tyes*. He was summoned as a Baron to Parliament in the same year as Ralph Pipard the owner of the other moiety.

Baron by Writ.²

1299. (1) Henry de Tyes, summoned to Parliament from 6 Feb. 27 Edw. I., 1299, to 26 Aug. 1 Edw. II., 1307; held by grant of Richard, Earl of Cornwall, the King’s brother, the manor of Sherburne in this county, and in 28 Edw. I. (1300) obtained a charter for a weekly market at his

¹ Testa de Neville.

² Courthorpe’s Historic Peerage.

manor of Mousehole in Cornwall. He died in 1308, and the following inquisition gives an exact account of his property in Fritwell.¹

“Henry Tyeis or Tyeys, deceased. Writ dated 8 Oct., 1 E. (2).

“Oxon.—Fretewelle.—Extent made there 24 Nov. 1 Ed. (2). He held the Manor of F. in “his demesne as of fee of the King in chief as of the Earldom of Albemarle, being in the King’s hands, “by the service of one Knight’s fee. There is one capital messuage, worth yearly 2^s., 60^a. arable “land, 21^s. (4^d. per acre), and 2^a. meadow, 8^s. (4^s. per acre), and 1 water-mill 6^s. 8^d. Total of the “demesnes, 37^s. 8^d.

“And there are there two free tenants who render yearly 12^s. 6^d. for all things; also free “tenants of another condition, who hold their tenements in free sokage, and render yearly 32^s. 4^d., and “their works in the time of mowing the meadow are worth 11^d. Total of rents of free men, 44^s. 10^d.; “of works, 11^d. And there are there 14 tenants in villenage, who render yearly 9^l. 2^s. 4^d., and each “of them shall work for 1 day in the autumn, which [works] are appraised at 18^d. And there are “there villans sokemen, who render yearly 118^s., and for autumnal works 3^s. 4^d. Also 10 cottars, “rendering 11^s. 5^d., and for like works, 10^d. Total rents of said villans, 15^l. 21^d.; works, 5^s. 8^d.” [Then follows an extent of the hamlet of Oke.] *i.e.*, 1^s. 9^d.

“Henry Tyeys, son and heir, æt. 22.”

Henry Tyes,

son and heir last mentioned, was summoned to Parliament from January 8, 6 Edw. II., 1313, to May 15, 14 Edward II., 1321. He served his King through several years with seeming fidelity, but afterwards joining in the rebellion of the Earl of Lancaster was with divers others taken prisoner at Boroughbridge, and hanged at London for his treason on April 3, 1322. His attainder was subsequently reversed; but he died without issue, leaving Alice his sister, wife of Warine de L’Isle, his heir.²

This *Warine de L’Isle* bore for his arms a lion passant, and was eminent in his military service to Edward II., but he also rebelled, and was hung at York—March 22, 1322. His estates were thereupon forfeited, but afterwards restored, 4 Edw. III. (1331). Thus Sherburne and Fritwell manors became once more the property of Alice, his widow, who may have held them to her death, or, as is most probable, may have made them over to her son, *Gerard de L’Isle*, with whom they continued till his death, 34 Edw. III., 1360, when another *Warine de L’Isle*, her grandson, had possession of them. This Warine married Margaret, daughter of Sir W. Pipard. He served the King, Edw. III., with distinction in the years 1360, 1370, and by indenture in 1373 was retained to serve for a whole year. The year following he contracted his son Gerard to the daughter of Sir Michael de la Pole; but this son, much loved, died, and the father in his declining years sought for rest with his daughter Margaret, the wife of Thomas, Lord Berkeley, and lived with her and her husband till his death in 1381.

“Inq. p. m., 6 Ric. II. Sir Waryne de L’Isle held the manor of Fretwelle at his death; “with Noke and Sherburne in Com. Oxon. At Sherburne he had license to enclose 100 acres of “wood to form a park, and also license to castellate his house.”

He left his estates to Lord Berkeley and his wife, whereupon they assumed the title of de L’Isle. Lord Berkeley died July 13, 1417, when the estates passed to Elizabeth, his only child,

¹ Inq. p. m., 1 Edw. II., No. 61.

² Margaret de Redvers, who had married Fulke de Breaute, had by this marriage a daughter named Alicia. This Alicia

married twice and had issue by both husbands. Her first husband was Warine de L’Isle, and their son of the same name married the sister and heir of Henry de Tyeys.

who married Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, and on her death were divided among his daughters.

At the beginning of the XIVth century this estate was in the possession of the Earls of Ormond, in Ireland. The first owner was

Edmund le Botiller.

"1313. Grant by the king to Edmund le Botiller of the privilege of free warren in the "manors of Rothereffeld and Fretwelle in Oxon."¹

"At an Inquest taken in this county the jurors found that Edmund le Botiller, who died on "the Feast of St. Michael, 16 Edw. 2, 1323, and his heir then in ward to the King, held the manor "of Fretwell in the county of Oxford, and £vi xviii^s vi^d of rents and other profits arising out of the "manor of Godindon in the same county."

1328. *James le Botiller.*

"Grant by the King to James le Botiller, Earl of Ormond, of the privilege of free warren "in the manors of Rotherfield and Fretwell in Oxon."²

1382. *James Botiller.*

"April 21. James Botiller, Earl of Ormond, at his death held of the king a messuage, a "carnucate of land, and £8 6^s of annual rent in Fretewelle, and the manor and advowson of "Rotherfield Pippard."³

"1389. Elizabeth, the wife of James Botiller, late Earl of Ormond, held at her death the "manor of Frytewell as her dower, which was of the annual value of x marks."⁴

1405. *James Boteler, Earl of Ormond.*

"By an Inquisition taken in 1405 return was made that James, Earl of Ormonde, held not "the manor of Fretwell, but a certain manor in the parish, called from his title Ormondiston."⁵

Successive earls held this manor through the XVth century, until the seventh earl, Thomas Butler, who died in 1515 without male issue, leaving two daughters and coheirs, *viz.*, Anne, wife of Sir John St. Leger, and Margaret, wife of Sir William Boleyn.

This manor then fell to *Sir William Boleyn*, but he died a year or two after coming into possession of it, leaving it to his son and heir, *Thomas Boleyn*. The latter at once sold it, but having omitted to obtain the King's license for so doing, he was obliged to sue for the royal pardon. This was granted in 1520-21.

"The King to all his Bailiffs and faithful men to whom these presents may come, "Greeting. Know ye that since Thomas Boleyn, Knight, and Elizabeth, his wife, lately by "a fine levied in our Court before Robert Rede and his associates, then our Justices of the "Bench, between them, Thomas and Elizabeth, and John Trevethenn, Thomas Barrett, William "Tusser and Nicholas Fynche, have acknowledged among other things that the manor of "Fritwell, with its appurtenances, and 200 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, 200 acres of "pasture, 3 acres of wood, and 13^s 4^d rent with their appurtenances in Frytwell in the county "of Oxford, are the right of him, Thomas Barrett, as those things which the same "Thomas Barrett, John, William and Nicholas, held by the gift of the aforesaid Thomas and "Elizabeth Boleyn, and have remitted them, and quitted claim for themselves, Thomas and "Elizabeth Boleyn, and the heirs of her, Elizabeth, to the aforesaid John, Thomas Barrett,

¹ Charters, 9 Edw. II., p. 1, No. 13.

² Charters, 2 Edw. III., p. 1, No. 13.

³ Inq. p. m., 6 Ric. II., No. 15.

⁴ Ibid., 13 Ric. II., No. 5.

⁵ Ibid., 6 and 7 Hen. IV., Kennett's P. A.

“ William and Nicholas, and the heirs of him, Thomas Barrett, for ever ; and since also Margaret Boleyn, widow, one of the daughters and heirs of Thomas, late Earl of Ormond, deceased, lately by a fine levied in our Court before the aforesaid Robert Rede and his associates, then our Justices of the Bench aforesaid, between her, Margaret, and the aforesaid John Trevethenn, Thomas Barrett, by the name of Thomas Barrett, William Tusser, and Nicholas Fynche, has acknowledged that the said manor, and the other premises with their appurtenances in the aforesaid county, by the name of the Manor of Frytwell, with its appurtenances and 200 acres of land, 40 acres of meadow, 200 acres of pasture, 3 acres of wood, and 13^s 4^d rent, with their appurtenances in Frytwell in the county of Oxford, are the right of him, Thomas, as those things which the same Thomas, John, William and Nicholas, hold by the gift of the aforesaid Margaret, and she has remitted them, and quitted claim for herself and her heirs aforesaid to the aforesaid John, Thomas, William and Nicholas, and the heirs of him, Thomas, for ever, as in the same separate agreements is more fully contained ; which manor, and the other premises with their appurtenances, are held of us in capite by royal license not hereupon obtained, We for £7 16^s —^d paid to us in our Exchequer, have granted a Pardon for the wrong done in this part, and we have further granted for ourselves and our heirs to the aforesaid John, Thomas Barrett, alias Barrett, William and Nicholas, that they may have and hold the aforesaid manor with its appurtenances, and the other premises with their appurtenances, for themselves and the heirs of him, Thomas Barrett, alias Barrett, of us, and our heirs by the services thereof due, and of law customary, for ever ; not willing that the aforesaid John, Thomas Barrett, alias Barrett, William and Nicholas, or the heirs of him, Thomas Barrett, alias Barrett, or the aforesaid Thomas and Elizabeth Boleyn or their heirs, or the aforesaid Margaret or her heirs, should by reason of the premises by us or our heirs, our Justices, Escheators, Sheriffs, or other Bailiffs or ministers, be thereof burdened, troubled in any way, or incommoded. In testimony whereof T’R at Westminster on the xxix day of September.”¹

There was a family of the name of Barrett long resident about this time at Souldern ; and the names of Robert Barrett (*Ob.* 1586) and of Ann Barrett (*Ob.* 1592) occur in the Fritwell Registers.

The Ormond farm was subsequently purchased by some member of the Fermor family, of Somerton and Tusmore, in the course of the XVIIth century.

A manor house was always attached to this estate, in which the reeve or bailiff resided. In 1308 it is described as “one capital messuage worth yearly 2^s.” This house was standing as late as king James I.’s reign, but had disappeared when Plot wrote his “History of Oxfordshire” at the end of the XVIIth century.

“1702. An agreement was drawn up between Samuel Cox, eldest son of Gabriel Cox, of Farningham co. Kent, and Henry Fermor, of Tusmore co. Oxon, whereby Henry Fermor borrows from Sam. Cox the sum of £300, in consideration of which H. Fermor grants him a lease of 21 years of Jackman’s farm (Ormond’s), in the parish of Fritwell, at the rental of £41 per ann. H. Fermor also agrees to allow S. Cox to erect a dovehouse, for which he will supply timber for the roof and door, and as many pigeons as are necessary to stock it.”

The erection of dove-cotes, or pigeon-houses, was controlled by law, the right to have these being limited to a certain class : lords of manors on their manors, and freeholders on their freeholds. They were in late times buildings generally of stone or brick, and were capable of holding many hundreds, and sometimes even thousands of birds.

¹ Patent Roll, 12 Hen. VIII., pt. 1, sec. 6.

A pond, a substantially-built stable, with carved doorway, and stonework of an older building inserted, and a dove-cot of large and singular construction, still remain on the site.

The Earl of Effingham, having purchased the Fermor property in 1867, soon afterwards sold that part of it which lay within Fritwell parish. This chiefly consisted of two farms of nearly equal size, which are now the property of Pembroke College, Oxford. One farm measures 127^a —^r 26^p, and was purchased by the College in 1867 of Mr. Samuel Smith of Somerton, who had bought it of Lord Effingham. This is charged with annual payments of 5/- to the Crown, and of £3 6^s 4^d to the Vicar of Fritwell. The other farm, now intersected by the Great Western Railway, measures 126^a 2^r 10^p, and was purchased by the College in 1862 from Mr. Beville Ramsay, who had acquired it in the previous year from Lord Effingham. Among the deeds in the Muniment Room of Pembroke College, there is an inordinately long abstract of title showing the descent of this property from the Fermor family. This estate having been thus broken up, the manor and its rights have come to an end, and no Manor Courts have been held for some years.

From the history of these two separate estates we may here pass to record some particulars of the general history of this village. A family of considerable property and position took their surname from it, and were resident, in the XIIth and XIIIth centuries. Among the records of the King's Court there is an entry :

"Die Dñica prox^o p. festū Om 'ium S'c 'om. Oxon. Abb. de Einshā de m ve. v'sus Miloñ de "Frettewell t Milisēt uxore ej^s de plac rect. de morte ancess p. Leonē t Waltm de Gardeñ."

(Translation.)

"On the Lord's day next after the Festival of All Saints, Oxon. The Abbot of Eynesham "about a wrong appears against *Melo of Frettewell* and *Milicent* his wife about a plea of right of "the death of an ancestor¹ by Leo and Walter Gardiner."

Under the feudal system, as it became systematized in the reign of William II., the King was enabled, in his position as chief landlord, to obtain aids in money from his tenants in chief. These were bound to serve for forty days in the year, but only at home. When, therefore, King Henry II. needed an army to defend his continental possessions, he came to an agreement with his vassals that the owner of every knight's fee should pay a sum of money known as *Scutage* (shield-money), in lieu of service. Both parties gained by this arrangement. The King got money, with which he paid his mercenaries abroad, who would fight for him all the year round, and the vassal escaped the onerous duty of fighting in quarrels in which he took no interest. The reign of Richard I. was disturbed by continual wars. When in 1192 he was taken prisoner and confined in a castle in the Tyrol, the Emperor Henry VI. demanded the enormous ransom of 150,000 marks = £100,000, which was wrung from the English people. A scutage of 20s. for every knight's fee was then demanded from all tenants, who held land from the King by military service.

"A.D. 1197, 8 Ric. I. Of the scutage of for the redemption of the lord the King.

"Wakelin Harengē . . . xx^s of the fee of the same, but it ought to be demanded of Milo "de Frettewell and Ralph, Geoffrey's son, and William Brun, the heirs of the same Wakelin."²

¹ Assize of the death of an ancestor is a writ that lay where lands, tenements, rents, etc., that were held in fee, and after their a man's father, mother, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, died seised of death a stranger abated (Tomlin's Law Dictionary).

² Pipe Rolls, Cart. MSS., Bodleian Lib. CXXXIII., fol. 170.

"Of new gifts. Milo de Fretwelle and William Brun owe 5 marks that they may not serve in the third army of the Normans, and for their scutage of two and a half knight's fees.¹

"1199. 1 John. Of the scutage of Knights' for redemption. Isold de Fretvill, Ralph Geoffrey's son, and William Brun, heirs of Wakelin Harenge."²

The families of de Fretwelle, and of Brun held property in other places.

"William le Brun, and Robert de Fretwell held of him of knights' fees in the village of Horton."³

"John Brun, and Richard de Fretwell hold land here from the Earl of Cornwall, and for the same should come to Erdington to the Court of Frankpledge."⁴

Grants of money in aid of their expenses were constantly demanded of the people by successive kings. There has been preserved a record of one such lay subsidy in the Hundred of Ploughley, in the year 1523-4. Collectors were appointed in every parish, but the sums collected have in many instances been obliterated.

"Robert Bakon sub-collector of the towne of Frytwell. . . ."

The extent of this parish has been estimated differently at different times. At the inclosure award in 1808 it was put at 1,850 acres 2 rood 10 poles. At the assessment for the Bicester Union it was reduced to 1,806 acres 3 rood 35 poles, and in 1889 it was further reduced to 1,672 acres 26 poles, at which it now stands. Of this 1,526 acres, more or less, are accounted for at the Domesday Survey. That survey did not include the balks which divided the ploughlands, nor the roads and trackways which gave access to them, and these together probably made up the number of acres not reckoned in the survey of the XIth century. The length of highways at the present time is 7 miles 7 furlongs 2 poles. The only natural boundary of this extent of land was the river Cherwell, which for a short distance bounded it on its west side. Marks, therefore, of different kinds, posts, hedges, ponds, trees, stones served for this purpose in other parts, and it was an important part of every year's business to see that these were carefully maintained. The ceremony of perambulating the boundaries of a parish ("processioning," as it was commonly called in later times) is an extremely old one. The Anglo-Saxons had their gang-dagas (=perambulation days), which came to be generally observed on one of the three Rogation days yearly. Their object was twofold: 1. To prepare for the proper observance of Ascension Day, by the parish priest and the inhabitants walking round the parish bounds in solemn religious procession, chanting litanies, etc., and making "humble supplication for a blessing on the fruits of the earth at this season blossoming forth"; 2. To keep in the remembrance of the parishioners the proper boundary-stones and other marks, and so to prevent encroachments. At the time of the Reformation the perambulations were continued, but many of the old ceremonial observances were dropped. Prayers, however, were said at different points of the route, especially at the mark-trees, where portions of the Gospel were often read (hence called Gospel trees, Gospel oaks, etc.), and a service in the church concluded the day's ceremony. One of the homilies of Queen Elizabeth's time is headed, "An Exhortation to be spoken to such parishes, where they use their Perambulation in Rogation weeke for the oversight of the boundes, and limits of their Towne." After the Restoration the religious portion of the ceremony was gradually lost sight of, and the processioning

¹ Pipe Rolls, Cart. MSS. CXXXIII., fol. 172.

² Ibid.

³ Inq. p. m. Richard, King of the Romans.

⁴ Erdington, now Yarnton; *ibid.* Thomas de Fretwell Capel-

lane was in 1260 presented by the Abbess of Godstowe to the Vicarage of Pateshull in Northamptonshire (*Bridge's History of Northamptonshire*, vol. i., p. 269).

day was kept as an ordinary village holiday. It is at this period that we first meet with an account of it in the records of this parish. In the churchwardens' accounts entries occur for several years.

"1641. Pd for the Procession, iij^s."

This continues until

"1660. Pd for the Procession, 5^s 6^d."

This continues, with an occasional variation,

"For Butter and Grise for the Possession,"

until 1699. An interval then occurred, when the old custom was omitted, but it was soon re-established, and with means for its continuance.

"1743. There is left to y^e Parish of Fritwell some lands now rented by Joseph Jervase, Wheelwright, to encourage the constant custom of going Possessioning or Processioning (as it is called), viz., fixing and keeping up the proper bounds of the Parish; all or parts of which rent is to be spent at y^e discretion of y^e minister, who appoints the time upon or near Ascension Day, as it is most convenient. This custom had been for some time omitted, but was reviv'd, and a piece of ground in Clifton meadow at the South end next to mead lands (the true bounds whereof were unknown to y^e oldest man in the parish), properly laid out and mark'd with Holes and posts, one close to y^e bank of the Cherwell, the other on the Bank of y^e opposite stream, dividing it from Bedmoor, and running in a line from the South end of Mr. Gough's spinney containing about one acre of ground, and now in the possession of . . . Truss of the parish of Souldern, as his salary for catching of moles or wonts in the parish. By me,

"W. VAUGHAN, Vicar."

Hence it appears that at the date of this notice this custom was in abeyance, and the profits of the land given for its maintenance were alienated to other uses. It has never been known to be practised within the memory of any existing inhabitant, and nothing is now known as to what has become of the land in question.

Elms of great age and size had grown up, and some centuries ago shaded the village, which, contrasting with the open treeless land outside, led to its being named *Fritwell in the Elms*. Two lanes or trackways led southwards. One leading to Heyford has been long known as *Rag House Lane*.¹ This name carries us back to the XVIth and XVIIth centuries, when paper-mills were first introduced into England. Linen rags of all kinds were then carefully collected for sale to the paper-makers. A paper-mill was established at Deddington, and a rag-house was set up just outside the village. A second trackway leading to Fewcott was named *King's Lane*, but the origin of this name is not apparent, unless it arose from this being the way to Bicester, part of which was known as King's End. A water-mill on Baron Tyes' manor, yielding a yearly money value of half a mark is mentioned in 1308. This was probably the same as had been the subject of a law-suit recorded in the Fine Rolls.

"1239. Stephen de Fritwell gave one mark to King Henry III. for a writ against Lawrence de Brok, Roger Foliot and Matthew de Bedell concerning a mill, and 2½ hides and 2½ acres in Fritwell."

Within the memory of the older inhabitants now living a windmill stood in a field, still called

¹ The oldest inhabitant now living (1892), aged 80, says that the road has been called by this name as long as he can recollect, and that when he was a boy an old man told him that a house once stood in the lane, where rags were stored for the paper-mill.

"Windmill Ground," about seven acres in extent, abutting on the road from Souldern to Fritwell, near the old turnpike gate.

This village being the centre of a district distant from the county towns (6 miles N.W. from Bicester, 5 miles S.E. from Deddington, 6 miles S.W. from Brackley, 10 miles S. from Banbury), has been a convenient place for the residence of tradesmen.

A clockmaker resident here was well known in the neighbourhood. The clock in Hanwell Church near Banbury bears an inscription on a plate secured to it,

"Sir Anthony Cope, Bart.

"George Harris in Fritwell fecit. January, 1671."

In the churchwardens' accounts of Yarnton there is an entry :

"1682. Pd Mr. Harris of Fretwell for mending the clock, £1 10s 0d."

Communication with the surrounding towns was very irregular and slow. Even as late as 1852 letters were brought daily by a man riding on a donkey from Brackley, who did not reach the village until mid-day, and left it on his return journey two hours later.

Goldsmith's words may here be quoted as not an inappropriate description of this village in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries:—"The place of our retreat was in a little neighbourhood, consisting of farmers who tilled their own grounds, and were equal strangers to opulence and poverty. As they had almost all the conveniences of life within themselves, they seldom visited towns or cities, in search of superfluity. Remote from the polite, they still retained the primeval simplicity of manners, and, frugal by habit, they scarce knew that temperance was a virtue. They wrought with cheerfulness on days of labour, but observed festivals as intervals of idleness and pleasure. They kept up the Christmas carol, sent true love knots on Valentine morning, ate pancakes on Shrovetide, showed their wit on the first of April, and religiously cracked nuts on Michaelmas Eve."¹

The open field outside the village was shut in at its boundaries by gates on each of the roads leading to and from it. The gate on the road from Souldern to Somerton, which formed the parish boundary on the N.W. side, and led to the meadow land near the Cherwell river, was called "Meadway Gate." That on the road leading from the village to Somerton was called "Deddington Gate;" that on the Portway Road called "Heath-end Gate;" that at the end of Rag-house Lane was called "Troy Gate," from its proximity to Troy Farm. The gate at the end of the road leading from the village to Souldern was called "Clap Gate." Different parts of the open field were distinguished by various names, which have a history of their own. Some land towards Somerton was called "Badgers," and tells of a lonely woodland spot, where a species of the wild animals, now almost extinct in this country, existed once in considerable numbers. The origin of the badger is so remote that it ranks amongst the oldest inhabitants of our islands, the remains of a species identical with it being found in the Red Crag of Suffolk. When badgers abounded the sport of badger-baiting was in vogue. In the yard of every public-house might be seen a barrel lying, in which the beast was kept ready to be "drawn" by any dog which might chance to look in, or a hole dug for the retreat of the badger, a den still more perilous to invade. These encounters frequently took place two or three times a day and the dog fared generally the worst, for owing to the peculiar way in which the upper and lower jaws are pointed, the grip of the badger is peculiarly tenacious. Left to itself the badger retreats to the deepest recesses of woods, or to the thick coppices covering the hill sides, and passes much of each day sleeping in a hole so intricate that it can seldom be driven out by fair means, or reached by superior force, whilst its habits are so

¹ Vicar of Wakefield, chap. IV.

omnivorous that it can subsist where a daintier feeder would perish. In the old slate quarries of Stonesfield, in Oxon, the animal finds, or did find, until lately, a stronghold. In the adjoining Cotswold Hills, the Forest of Wichwood, Ditchley Park and Woods, at Oddington, and Addlestrop, in the park planted by Warren Hastings at Daylesford, its holes used to be discovered in considerable numbers. By an Act of Parliament passed in 1850, the sport of badger-baiting was prohibited, and the progress of agriculture and the more dense population of the country have gradually civilized the animal off the face of our islands, until it is now almost everywhere a rare or at least a waning member of the British fauna. In some land adjoining Souldern foxes abounded, and the lane near this was called "Fox-hall Lane." In another part of the open field were "The Leys," a name which tells of good pasture fenced off for hay and cattle grazing. Other parts carry us back to the old acre strips, with their modern names, "Lower Meadway Furlong," "Lank Furlong," "Souldern Hedge Furlong," "Horwell's Corner Furlong" (at the corner of the Drift Road, at its junction with the road from Souldern to Tusmore), "Rush Green Furlong," "Winstow Dean Furlong," "Upper Burnwards Ditch Furlong," "Lower Broadway Furlong" (bounded by the Portway and Somerton roads), "Upper Seven Acres," "Fieldman's Hook," "Slades Bull Hook," "Catcher's Hook," etc. Some old enclosures were known as "Barrow Close," lands called "Wyseman's and Welchman's," a yard land called "Day's." Besides these there were "The Slades," "Hillway Butts," "The Cow Common" (on the Somerton side), "New-brook Leys" (bounded by Rag-house Lane).

Proposals to enclose the open field began to be made in the last decade of the last century.

Letter from Mr. Horseman, Rector of Souldern, to Dr. Craven, Master of St. John's College, Cambridge :—

"Souldern, March 16, 1791.

"Dear Sir,

"The Proprietors of Land in the open Field of Fritwell (in which the Rector of Souldern has about sixty acres of arable land and a proportionable share of Common and Meadow Ground) had a meeting yesterday and determined to carry a Bill into the House of Commons, tho' in opposition to the wish of one of the principal Proprietors. I have hitherto been neuter in the business, have neither signed the Petition nor promised to oppose the Bill, and had all the reason in the World to presume that it would this year have dropped, as it had done in the preceding year—and therefore did not trouble you with an account of their disputes which I took for granted would end in nothing. But as the Proprietors begin now to talk seriously of bringing the Bill into the House the week after next, and have fixed upon Saturday, the twenty-sixth day of the month for a meeting, finally to determine the matter, I have lost no time to apprise you of their resolution."

Letter from Mr. Churchill, of Deddington, to Rev. R. Jones, Rector of Souldern.

"February, 1807.

"Dear Sir,

"I beg to send you the result of the Meeting of the Proprietors of Estates at Fritwell as to the propriety of enclosing the field, held on Monday last. The meeting was very fully attended, I believe not more than one or two Proprietors besides yourself were absent, and the purport of the Resolutions of the meeting are as follows: Mr. John Davis of Bloxham appointed a Commissioner by Mr. Willis the Impropiator, and also Patron of the Living, as well as owner of another large Estate; Mr. Thomas Hopcraft appointed a Commissioner by Mr.

"Fermor, a very considerable proprietor, and Mr. Weston of Aynho appointed a Commissioner by the other Proprietors,¹ in which class of Proprietors you and the Vicar of Fritwell are included. As Mr. Weston is the Commissioner named by you, with the other Proprietors, I think it right to inform you he is a man we very well know and recommend and is of great Respectability and Judgment and lives at Aynho adjoining Souldern. The other Commissioners live in the neighbourhood also. The Surveyor appointed is Mr. Thomas Hopcraft, Junr.

"Mr. Rd. Bignell of Banbury is appointed Solicitor to the Bill, and Mr. Field, my Partner, Clerk to the Commissioners. The Commutation for Tithes agreed upon by the Meeting are $\frac{1}{3}$ th of all the Greensward Ground except the old inclosures about the Village. One fifth of all the Arable Land lying to the Westward of a line to be drawn due North and South from the Eastern Boundary of the old Inclosures adjoining Eastward of the said line in lieu of all Tithes, except of the old Inclosed Pasture Grounds in and about the Village for which the Vicar is to receive after the Rate of five shillings an acre. The Commissioners to apportion between the great and small Tithe Owners according to their respective rights. The fences of the Tithe allotments to be made and raised at the expence of the proprietors of lands exonerated from Tithes, and all expences of the Act and of the Execution thereof (so far as respects the Tithe Allotments) borne by them. The above are the outlines of the Resolutions of the meeting and with which the Proprietors present were quite satisfied. From the confidence you have been pleased to place in me I think it right to state every circumstance that comes to my knowledge respecting the Inclosure. It was in contemplation about sixteen years ago to inclose the field (at which time our Office had nothing to do with the Business) when Mr. Horseman the then and late Rector of Souldern expected the land in Fritwell Field belonging to the Rectory of Souldern to be considered as entitled to every advantage as the Lands belonging to the *Improprate Patron and Vicar of Fritwell*, but this the Proprietors objected to and upon that the Inclosure went off.² This has been mentioned to the Proprietors at the present time and is objected to, on the ground of its not belonging to the Rectory or Vicarage of the *Parish* and a strong reason urged was that if Lands bought in one Parish to augment the Living in another Parish were to be inclosed and exonerated from the general expences of the Act and Inclosure that the expences would be so enormous to other Proprietors that it would put a stop to inclosing Fields."

The first meeting of the Inclosure Commissioners was held "at the house of Edward Holloway, known by the name or sign of the Red Lion in Aynhoe on June 22, 1807." The following Award was subsequently made:—

						<i>Quantities.</i>		
						<i>Acres.</i>	<i>R.</i>	<i>P.</i>
William Fermor, Esq.	...	...	...	...	...	603	2	1
Same late J. Kilby	...	...	...	...	...	111	1	16
Total						714	3	17
The Rev. W. S. Willes	...	...	...	...	...	236	1	15
With 3 Allotments for tithes	...	...	...	...	...	15	2	16
Total						251	3	31

¹ John Court of the city of Oxford, Gentleman; James Nase of the city of Oxford, Upholder; Robert Johnson of Fritwell, Baker, John Barnes of Fritwell, Gentleman.

² This was afterwards contradicted. In a letter dated Febru-

ary, 1807, Mr. Robert Foon, Senior Bursar of St. John's College, Cambridge, says, "It was set aside by the opposition of "one of the principal proprietors."

Total 6 0 3

First Allotment for public Stone Pit.

	<i>Acres.</i>	<i>R.</i>	<i>P.</i>
2nd Do. ... } 3rd Do. ... } 4th Do. ... } 5th Do. ... }	2	I	II
Awarded Roads ..	4I	0	IS
Town, Streets, and other Roads ...	4	I	IS
Total	47	2	38

"This Award contained in fourteen Skins or Sheets of Parchment was signed, sealed and delivered by John Davis, Robert Weston, and Thomas Hopcraft, the Commissioners therein named, being first duly stamped in the presence of us.

"SAM. C. FIELD, Attorney, Deddington,

"JH. S. HEMINGWAY, Surveyor, Crowton.

"The Award is in the custody of the Vicar."

The English village was generally the reflect of the various parties and struggles of the English political world. The famous County Election of 1754 excited unusual interest in this village, and more voters from it went to the poll than from any other place in this district except Bicester. The general feeling was strongly Conservative, supporting Lord Wenman and Sir James Dashwood, the candidates on the "Old Interest" side.

	<i>Place of Abode.</i>	<i>Occupier.</i>	<i>Freehold.</i>	<i>W.</i>	<i>D.</i>	<i>P.</i>	<i>T.</i>
Badger, George ...	Fritwell	Self	Tenement	—	—		
Colley, John ...	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Colley, Robert ...	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Dodwell, William	—	—	Tenement	—	—		
Endall, Edward ...	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Franklin, William	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—		
George, Robert ...	Tingewick, Bucks	J. Rouse, etc.	Tenements	—	—		
Harris, Nathaniel	Fritwell	Self	Land	—	—		
Hemins, William	—	—	Land	—	—		
Hobcraft, John ...	—	—	Tenement	—	—	—	—
Hobcraft, Richard	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Hobcraft, William	Tinley, Northamp- tonshire	John Collins	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Hollier, Charles ...	Sommerton	—	Land	—	—		
Jackson, Hicks ...	Fritwell	Self	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Ibell, Giles ...	Deddington	Thos. Abraham	Land	—	—		
Kilby, William ...	Fritwell	Self	Land and Tenements	—	—		
Lord, William ...	Little Tew	Nathaniel Harris	Land	—	—	—	—
Mauds, James ...	Fritwell	Self	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Maylard, Thomas	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—	—	—
Rand, Christopher	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Robbins, Edward	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Soley, Benjamin ...	—	—	Land and Tenement	—	—	—	—
Taylor, Robert ...	—	—	Tenement	—	—	—	—
Vaughan, W. Clerk	—	—	Vicarage	—	—		
Wake, Sir Charles	—	—	Land and Tenements	—	—		
Watts, James ...	—	—	Tenement	—	—		
Welchman, John	Brockley	J. Collinridge	Land and Tenement	—	—		
Wells, William ...	Sommerton	—	Land	—	—		
Wise, Henry ...	Fritwell	Self	Land and Tenement	—	—	—	—
				23	23	6	6

The Church Registers date from the year 1558. This was the year of Queen Elizabeth's accession, when the mandate, issued twenty years before by Cromwell as Vicar General for keeping registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials in every parish, was repeated in more rigorous terms, and was duly observed here by Mr. Shaw after his institution to this vicarage. This not being generally observed; it was further ordained in 1597 that parchment register books should be purchased at the expense of each parish, and that all the names entered in the older books (mostly strips of paper) should be therein transcribed from the year 1558. It was therefore one of the first acts of Mr. Hunt, vicar, to provide such a book, the oldest of the registers now existing. In this the entries (copied in one and the same handwriting until 1606), give the following particulars :

<i>Years.</i>			<i>Baptisms.</i>			<i>Marriages.</i>			<i>Burials.</i>
1558	...	...	3	...	...	3	...	...	3
1559	...	...	4	...	...	0	...	...	4
1560	...	...	4	...	...	2	...	...	2
1561—70	...	...	53	...	...	14	...	...	19
1571—80	...	...	65	...	...	12	...	...	29
1581—90	...	...	65	...	...	15	...	...	26
1591—1600	...	...	56	...	...	10	...	...	41
1601—10	...	...	54	...	...	13	...	...	40
1611—20	...	...	51	...	...	7	...	...	25
1621—30	...	...	41	...	...	10	...	...	32
1631—40	...	...	43	...	...	10	...	...	38
1641—50	...	...	49	...	...	0	...	...	0

The entries during the Commonwealth are wanting. The following extract from the registers of Kilworth, Leicestershire, tersely gives the reason for these usual deficiencies.

"A.D. 1641. Know all men that the reason why little or nothing is registered from the year " 1641 until the year 1649 was the civil wars between King Charles and his Parliament, which put " all into a confusion till then, and neither minister nor people could quietly stay at home for one " party or the other."

The entries after the Restoration are also very irregular until the year 1695, when a second Register Book was begun, and for many years carefully kept.

<i>Years.</i>			<i>Baptisms.</i>			<i>Marriages.</i>			<i>Burials.</i>
1701—10	...	...	60	...	...	13	...	...	43
1711—20	...	...	66	...	...	6	...	...	70
1721—30	...	...	64	...	...	10	...	...	53
1731—40	...	...	80	...	...	26	...	...	77
1741—50	...	...	121	...	...	35	...	...	71
1751—60	...	...	109	...	...		...	...	69
1761—70	...	...	96	...	...		...	...	78
1771—80	...	...	91	...	...		...	...	71
1781—90	...		27 up to 1783			...	...		22 up to 1783
1791—1800	...	...		...	...		...	...

It is interesting to note the growth of the village population. At the taking of the Survey in 1086 the adult male population amounted to twenty-two. These may be assumed to have been

married men with families, thus supplying a general population of about seventy persons. In the Hundred Rolls of Edward I.'s reign the landholders mentioned are twenty-four, thus proving that during the two centuries following the Survey there was only a very slight increase. Then there followed here as elsewhere for a long interval of years an absence of all increase, if not a plain decrease, until about the middle of the XVIth century an upward change set in. The growth then begun was continued slowly through the XVIIth, and rapidly through the XVIIIth centuries, as the Church Registers show, until in the first year of this present century it had made so great advance that it became more than five times as great as it was 800 years ago. The census returns show its further increase.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Population.</i>			<i>Total.</i>	<i>Inhabited.</i>	<i>Houses.</i>		<i>Building.</i>
	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>				<i>Uninhabited.</i>		
1801 ¹	190	206		396	—	—		—
1811	210	226		436	—	—		—
1821	230	246		476	95	—		2
1831	238	256		494	—	—		—
1841	257	267		524	121	2		—
1851	268	246		514	123	4		2
1861	280	262		542	130	3		—
1871	—	—		552	138	—		—
1881	283	273		556	134	9		1
1891	289	268		557	133	11		—

Separate Families.

1821	100	resident in 95 houses	
1871	138	„	138 „
1881	136	„	134 „
1891	133	„	133 „

Occupations.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Families chiefly</i>			<i>In trade and</i>		<i>All other</i>	<i>Total.</i>
	<i>employed in agriculture.</i>	<i>manufactures.</i>	<i>classes.</i>				
1821	13	22	65			100	

Ages.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Under 20 years.</i>		<i>20 years and upwards.</i>		<i>Persons born</i>	
	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>	<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>	<i>In this county.</i>	<i>Elsewhere.</i>
1841	126	119	131	148	472	52
<i>Oldest man. Oldest woman.</i>						
1881	89	81	—	—	—	275
1891	80	86	—	—	—	273
<i>Born in the village.</i>						

Hence it appears that the growth of population in this village has been exceptional, and that even in the last few years it has not been affected by the exodus from the country to towns, which has been so general in other villages. At the beginning of the present century there was much pauperism among the poorer classes; for in a single year, ending Easter, 1803, the money raised for poor and other rates amounted to £227 8s. 1½d., at 6s. in the pound. At the present time the working

¹ No return was made from Fritwell in 1801, the numbers here given having been obtained by estimation founded on the actual returns in subsequent years.

population numbers about ninety male adults, of whom sixty are employed in agricultural labour. There are several small tradesmen resident, and the largest and most prominent building in the village is a store house for the sale of various articles of common use.

But if in the growth of its population this village shows a difference from many others, it follows the prevailing custom of the country at the present time in agricultural matters. In the year 1872 there were nearly four million acres of land devoted to wheat growing in this country. During the following decade the area gradually contracted till, in 1882, it only just exceeded three millions, and since then the process has continued, till now we have less than two million three hundred thousand acres to depend on for our wheat supply. Thus in twenty years the decrease amounts to more than forty per cent., and shows no sign of stopping. Comparing the present with last year, we find the number of acres under wheat less by fully ninety thousand than in 1891. Again there has been a very perceptible decline in the quantity of land cultivated for green crops in the country generally. For example, the total area under corn crops has fallen from 11,698,245 acres in 1872 to 10,620,196 acres in 1882, and to 9,328,701 acres in 1892. Thus we have 1,291,495 acres less corn than we grew ten years ago, and 2,369,544 acres less than we produced twenty years ago. Considerably more than half of this great reduction in corn is due to wheat, the area of which has fallen off by 865,292 acres during the last decade, and by 1,540,925 acres, or over forty per cent. in twenty years.

These statistics are gathered from the returns made to the Board of Agriculture from single parishes, and the return from this parish is a contribution in confirmation of them.

NUMBER OF STATUTE OR IMPERIAL ACRES UNDER CULTIVATION.

Corn Crops.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Wheat.</i>	<i>Barley or Bere.</i>	<i>Oats.</i>	<i>Rye (Corn).</i>	<i>Beans.</i>	<i>Peas.</i>
1884	213½	208½	149½	0	61	59½
1885	177½	242	133½	0	21	33½
1886	191¾	272	116½	0	9½	43
1887	217	276½	120½	1	12½	48½
1888	222¾	208¾	103½	5½	26	49
1889	219½	244½	63¾	½	14	22
1890	154¾	259½	100½	0	5½	44
1891	175½	242¾	138	½	5½	32½

Green Crops.

<i>Year.</i>	<i>Potatoes.</i>	<i>Turnips and Swedes.</i>	<i>Mangold.</i>	<i>Carrots.</i>	<i>Cabbage.</i>	<i>Rape.</i>	<i>Vetches or Tares.</i>	<i>Other Green Crops (not being Clover, Sainfoin, "Seeds," etc.), but including Crops grown in market gardens not separately named, such as Rhubarb, Parsnips, Onions, etc.</i>
1884	9½	138¾	21	0	1	4	31½	11
1885	13	185	27	0	1	4	36	2
1886	5	173½	15¾	0	0	0	28½	14
1887	11½	173½	14½	0	1	0	42½	0
1888	8¾	139½	12½	½	0	0	44½	0
1889	12½	184	10	0	0	0	13½	0
1890	5½	147½	16¾	0	0	0	20½	0
1891	13¾	128½	19½	¼	0	0	17¾	1½

Thus this parish, like many others, witnesses to the general state of agriculture in the present distress (1) in the diminution of land cultivated for grain crops, and (2) in the decline of the wheat crop. At the Domesday Survey the area of arable land amounted to 639 acres more or less. There was but a slight increase in the course of eight centuries, the returns of 1884 showing 897 acres under cultivation for grain crops. But a decline has lately set in, the cultivated area in 1891 being 125 acres less than in 1884, and the wheat crop having dropped to the lowest figures yet recorded.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Gross estimated rental of parish.</i>						<i>Ratable value.</i>		
	£	s.	d.	...	£	s.	d.
1870	3,526	16	6	...	...
1871	3,528	13	3	...	3,198	5	0
1874	3,557	13	3	...	3,226	10	0
1881	3,500	4	6	...	3,167	9	3
1883	3,389	10	0	...	2,956	0	0
1888	3,199	0	0	...	2,773	0	0
1889	2,689	0	0	...	2,326	0	0

County Assessment.

<i>Years.</i>	...	...	£
1870	...	...	2,900
1883	...	...	3,166
1888	...	...	2,972

THE SCHOOL.

The Act of Parliament passed in 1870 enforcing elementary education made it necessary to erect a school sufficient to meet the requirements of the Government. Before this time a small school had been held for a few years in the Vicarage house, but in 1872 the present school buildings, with a master's house, were erected at a cost of about £700. The average attendance of children at the present time is 120.

HICCOCK'S CHARITIES.

Among the memorials of the departed in the Parish Church are these, as described by Dr. Rawlinson in his MS. notes,

“ On a brass plate fixed to a seat in capitals :

“ Here lyeth buried the body of
 “ William Hickock who departed this life
 “ the 8th of September, Anno Dom. 1633
 “ who after the decease of Philipp his wife
 “ hath given forty shillings by the yeare
 “ for ever unto the poor of Frutewell
 “ to be paid by those that possess the land.”

" In the middle Ile on a black marble gravestone in capitals :

" Here lieth the body of
 " Richard the husband of Bridget Hiccock
 " who departed this life the 3 day of January
 " Anno Domini 1708 Ætatis suæ 78 years."

" An entry in the Church Register recites :

" Mr. William Hiccock left fortie shillings to be paid yearly for ever to the poor of Fritwell, videlicet, Twentie shillings to be att Ester paid, and twentie shillings to be distributed att Xmas.

" January y' 1st 1738.

" Memorandum that four pounds was given to the poor of Fritwell by the late Bridget Hiccock, Deceased, and also paid by the hands of Drope Gough, Executor, to the Vicar and Churchwardens and Overseers of Fritwell, and likewise fifty shillings for her being buried in linen according to the late act of parliament. I say, Proved by us,

" WILLIAM VAUGHAN, Vic.,
 " JOHN COLLEY,
 " THOMAS HEATLEY. } Churchwardens."

The Charity Commissioners reported in 1825 :

" This annual sum is now paid by Mrs. Court, the possessor of an estate in Fritwell, which formerly belonged to Hiccock. It is distributed, together with the next-mentioned charity, about Christmas in bread or coal, as has been thought most expedient by the minister. In the winter of 1823 the distribution was in bread. Single persons had each a quartern loaf, those with families a half peck loaf, and some, whose families were large, received more. They were given to all the poor parishioners indiscriminately. The coals, when given, were distributed amongst the poor upon a similar principle of division. The non-resident parishioners have also partaken of this charity, money or bread having been given to them, as was most convenient."

This is the only public charity now existing.

" DONOR UNKNOWN.

" An annual sum of 20s. is paid by Mr. Adams, the tenant of an estate in Fritwell, belonging to William Fermor, Esq., called South Field Farm, upon which the payment is supposed to be charged, but it is not known by whom this charity was given. It is distributed with Hiccock's charity."

The capital sum of this charity, amounting to £20, was called " The Town Stock." There being no ready means of investing so small a sum, it was let out at yearly interest for short terms to parishioners. It is of ancient origin, for it is mentioned in the churchwardens' accounts of 1572 and 1579, when sums of money are credited as due to this stock.

" Sir Baldwin Wake has ten pounds of the stock money ; y^e interest due y' 1st of May."

" Vincent King has ten pounds of the stock money. P^d 2 years interest July y' 30th, 1741."

" The town money £20 let out to Katherine Freeman of Launton, widdow, at four per cent. The first interest paid at Easter, 1743."

"The whole of it now in the hands of Mrs. Kilby of this parish. Received interest, July y^e 29th, 1755.

"In the hands of Joseph Jervase, Wheelwright, 1757.

"The Poor's money of twenty pounds is in the hands of William Fermor, Esq., of Tusmore.

"The note for it in my hands.

"JAMES HAKEWELL, Vicar."

In 1872 the Town Stock was given to the fund for building the National School, under the authority of the Charity Commissioners, at the request of the parishioners.

LOST CHARITY.

"It is stated by an old parishioner that there was formerly £20 charity money, the interest of which used to be distributed, but which afterwards came into the hands of a person who became insolvent, and the money was lost."¹

"THE PARISH CHURCH.

"As star that shines dependent upon star
 "Is to the sky, while we look up in love ;
 "As to the deep, fair ships, which though they move
 "Seem fixed, to eyes that watch them from afar ;
 "As to the sandy desert fountains are,
 "With palm-groves shaded at wide intervals,
 "Whose fruit around the sun-burnt native falls,
 "Of roving tired or desultory war ;
 "Such to this British Isle her Christian fanes,
 "Each linked to each for kindred services ;
 "Her spires, her steeple-towers, with glittering vanes
 "Far-kenned, her chapels lurking among trees,
 "Where a few villagers on bended knees
 "Find solace, which a busy world disdains."

WORDSWORTH.

The patron saint of this church is St. Olave, also named Olaus, or Holofius. He was the first King of Norway converted to Christianity through the ministry of the English. He was confirmed by an English bishop, King Ethelred standing as his godfather. Subsequently he sent to England for missionaries to preach Christianity in his own country. He seems to have attached himself particularly to England, for he came with a powerful fleet up the Thames to help King Ethelred dislodge the Danes from London and Southwark, which they then possessed. He particularly distinguished himself in the destruction of London Bridge, and there can be little doubt that gratitude for their remembrance of this service led the English to preserve the memory of St. Olave in the two churches called by his name at the north and south ends of London Bridge. St. Olave's zeal in behalf of Christianity raised up much opposition among his pagan subjects, by whom he was slain in battle on July 29, 1050. On this day his martyrdom has been since commemorated. He is generally represented as a king with a dagger, sword, or halberd, in reference to his martyrdom, and sometimes with a whole loaf in his hand, a rebus upon his name Holofius. Fourteen churches in England still retain dedications in his name. The dedication of this church is therefore a late one. The original church had been probably dedicated to some

¹ There is probably some confusion here with the former charity called the Town Stock.

Saxon Saint, but when a new church was built after the Norman Conquest, old memories revived, and the traditions of Danish cruelties on the persons of the original settlers made a dedication to one who had helped to deliver them from these very appropriate and acceptable. The dedication feast is still kept on the day originally fixed for the commemoration of this saint.¹

Village churches have no written history, but undying associations cling about their walls. Hence we know that the end of the XIth and the beginning of the XIIth century were essentially a church-building and church-restoring age. The Norman warriors, who won their possessions in England by the sword, did not forget the giver of the victory, and nearly every cathedral and great abbey, with at least 8,000 parish churches, were founded or built during that period.² Thus the once Saxon church of this village gave place to a Norman building, probably the pious gift of Robert Foliot, who became thereby the patron of the advowson. Like the castles, churches cost money, and were a long time in building. Begun in one style of architecture, they were finished in another, and it was nothing unusual to build a part, the chancel, or the nave, or the tower, leaving it to others to complete what had been begun. Thus here a nave only was first built. Traces of good Norman work are to be seen in the two doorways, the columns of the nave, and in the low small arch (now placed on the north side of the chancel) which originally formed the central arch leading into a low apse. The two doorways are especially noticeable. They are of nearly equal proportions and ornament, as being the entrances from the two separate parts of the village. The north doorway has the cable moulding for a drip-stone, with good terminations, and the south doorway has some curious sculpture between the top of the door and the arch over it (a space called the *tympanum*).

In the county of Oxford, including Caversfield, Langford and Widford, which were in outlying portions of other counties, there were 100 churches which till recently retained doorways dating back to the Norman period of architecture. These doorways may be roughly divided into four architectural periods. The earliest dates from Saxon times, and terminated about the year 1080. These were comparatively small and very plain, and no certain example of this date exists in Oxfordshire, though it is probable that the doorways at Swyncombe, Broughton Pogis, Sandford, Newnham Murren, and one (now blocked) at Aston Rowant, are of this earliest period.

The next period extends from 1080 to about 1130, when we find a series of doorways of comparatively plain and massive character, chiefly with bold roll mouldings on the arch, and solid cylindrical shafts with cushion or plain scalloped capitals. A good example may be seen at Ambrosden.

The third class may be taken as having been constructed between the years 1130 and 1175. These exhibited all the elaborate workmanship of ornamental architecture peculiar to the Norman style. The columns were richly decorated on their surface; the capitals in a better style of finish; the intersecting piers were covered with highly-wrought foliage and flowers, or rude figures of saints in panels. By far the finest examples in Oxfordshire, and among the richest in the kingdom, are the three splendid doorways at Iffley. There is a good example of the zigzag ornament at Mixbury, and at Stoke Lyne there is a considerable variety in the ornamental mouldings.

The fourth class, or transient period of the Norman doorways, seems to have commenced about the year 1175, and to have finally been merged in the Early English style about 1210. Many of the doorways are plain, with semicircular arches, and a plain chamfered angle to the jambs; but some are very elegant in their designs, and exhibit considerable depth and undercutting

¹ Calendar of the English Saints, by J. Parker.

² East Anglian Notes, part XL., The Old Churches of Essex.

in the arch-mouldings. At Middleton Stoney there is a good specimen of the late chevron ornament, and at Newton Purcel is perhaps the earliest example of the dog-tooth. At Bucknell are two semicircular-headed doorways quite of the Early English type.¹

A considerable number of churches have tympana remaining above the doorways, and no less than thirty-eight such can be enumerated in this county. Many of the tympana are now plain, though, as has been found elsewhere, they may originally have been decorated with coloured designs, or even sacred and symbolical subjects. There are plain examples most slightly recessed within the arch, at Fringford, while at Newton Purcel there is a large bird and serpent in the midst of foliage. At Fritwell there are two animals on either side of a tree,² and at Middleton a tree only. It has been suggested that these are mere devices of a carver prompted by some temporary fancy to fill up a blank space in his design. But our skilful workmen of old days did not waste time and energy in filling up blank spaces, but they meant what they represented to be symbols and emblems. A tree blossoming or budding forth is often symbolical of the care and protection of Almighty God overshadowing His Church, or of the Tree of Knowledge in Paradise. A tree surrounded by animals often indicates that the Church has been founded, or the patron saint has lived, in a solitary place, or in the wild country originally occupied by wild beasts. At Fritwell the two branches of the tree are seen to proceed out of the mouths of the two animals, and the animals are nondescript, the artist not seeming to have attempted anything more than would serve for lion, dog, hog, etc.

The XIIIth century was also an age marked by immense activity in ecclesiastical architecture, and the parish churches of this country, as of all others, show much work of this date. Indeed, a large number of village churches, as we now see them, appear to have been built or rebuilt in the Early English style, and though altered in many cases at later periods, still its characteristic features may be discovered under the later work of the building. Thus here the present chancel was built to take the place of the original Saxon apse, the east end being of singular design. At the same time side aisles were added to the nave, and a western tower was built, these all being Early English work. It was the custom in mediæval times among architects to preserve the doorways as well as the fonts of the churches which they rebuilt or altered, and thus the doorways are often, as here, older than the walls in which they stand.

In the XIVth century the Decorated style prevailed, and we see again evidences of much activity in church work. Such evidences are visible in this church in the font, octagonal with carving in low relief, and a highly-decorated rood-loft, of which considerable portions were remaining *in situ* as late as the year 1823.

During the prevalence of the Perpendicular, Rectilineal, or third Pointed style of architecture (1425—1525), the high-pitched roof of the nave was replaced by a flat one, the walls being raised upon the arches of the nave to receive the clere-, or upper, story windows, to give more light within the building.

A cross was erected on the south side of the churchyard, close to the pathway leading from the most populous part of the village to the church, and from its steps many a travelling friar preached a sermon, and before it many a mourner stayed to breathe a prayer.

¹ See a paper on Norman Doorways, read by C. E. Keyser, Esq., F.S.A., before the Oxfordshire Archæological Society in Lent Term, 1890. He has a series of photographs containing nearly all the tympana in England.

² An engraving of the south doorway is given in Skelton's

Oxfordshire. A similar tympanum may be seen at Lullington (Somersetshire), Knook (Wilts), Ashford (Derbyshire), Lathbury and Dinton (Bucks), Wordwell (Suffolk), and Llanbadarnvawr (Radnorshire).

A single bequest only is recorded :

“ Frytwell.

“ 1545, Aug. 12. Robert Bacon¹ of Frytwell bequeaths to the church of Frytwell 4 bushels of barley.”

A single coat of arms was noted by A. Wood as visible in the XVIIth century :

“ In a North Window.

“ v a + niger sab. w^{ch} is all in y^e church.”

Some of the changes in church furniture, which took place in the XVIth century, are alluded to in the accounts of the churchwardens. In 1549 an order was issued from the Privy Council “to every bishop to pluck down the altars, and in lieu of them to set up a table in some “convenient place of the chancel.” This order was probably not executed here until some years later, for the year 1568 had come before a new carpet was provided for the Communion-table.

A long period of shameful neglect soon commenced. The violent demolition of altars, and the flagrant spoliation of churches, led to further acts of irreverent contempt and neglect. In 1562 it was found necessary to call attention to the necessity of keeping clean and repairing the sacred edifices. “It is a sin and a shame,” says one of the Homilies, “to see so many churches so “ruinous and foully decayed in almost every corner.” Weever, writing in 1631, says, “We have “not heard of any hanging of church robbers in these our days; for what man will venture a turn “at the gallows for a little silver chalice, a beaten-out pulpit cushion, an over-worn communion “cloth, and a coarse surplice? These are all the riches and ornaments of most of our churches. “Such is now the slight regard we have of the decent setting-forth of sacred religion.”² What the condition of this church was at this period there is no direct evidence to prove, but it appears from the list of church goods in 1593 that it was well furnished with the necessities of public worship.

“ 6 March, 1584.³

“ The office of the lord against the
“ churchwardens of Ffritwell, for there
“ churche mounds are in great decaye.

} “ They were summoned by Dasie. On the
“ last day of March they appeared, and to the
“ article objected to them they own that it is
“ true. They have time to repair them before
“ Easter next, and to certify before the next
“ court then following.”

About the year 1620 the pew system crept into this church by Mr. Edward Yorke, after coming into residence in his newly-built house, erecting in the nave “a large pew, enriched with “beautiful carving of the same period as the manor house.”⁴ This pew remained as it was at first erected until the year 1864, when it was taken down, and its carved woodwork was removed to the Manor House, where it still stands on the left-hand side of the entrance.

Dr. Rawlinson, the antiquary, visiting this church in the autumn of 1718, took a favourable view of its internal appearance :

“ Wake here, Sunday after S. James’ day. The Church is very neat, in good repair; 3 bells. “Now in mourning for Sir Edward Longueville, who was unfortunately kill’d by a fall from his “horse at Burcester race, Aug. 19, 1718.”

¹ He was the sub-collector of the lay subsidy in 1523.

² East Anglian Notes, part XLI.

³ Records of the Archdeacon of Oxford’s Court.

⁴ Skelton’s History of Oxon.

But a century later no such good account of the fabric or its furniture could be given. The churchwardens for several years, at the beginning of the present century, made presentments of various parts of the fabric being out of repair. Bad became worse, and in 1852 the curate in charge, Mr. Wood, wrote to complain that on one occasion in administering the Holy Communion the rain fell through the chancel roof upon his head, and the plaster upon the holy table.

On May 18, 1853, the Rural Dean made an official visit to this church, and sent a report to the Bishop :

“ The roof of the nave is very much out of repair. The lead is sound, but full of dents, which hold the rain. The main beam in the roof of the S. porch is rotting. The walls of the interior are very dirty, being covered with dust and cobwebs. The stone floors throughout the building are very uneven and damp, and the wood flooring in the seats is full of holes, and quite rotten in many places. The timber framework of the bells needs substantial repair, two of the beams being nearly broken through. The font, too, is bad, and there is no plug, a metal basin being used to hold the water. The altar linen is coarse, but in decent condition. The church-yard is intersected by five or six different footpaths, which give it a very neglected and slovenly appearance. The earth is heaped up against the walls to a depth of 1½ feet on the north side, and to 3 feet on the S. side.”

The Rural Dean also wrote to the lay rector, Mr. Willes, who replied :

“ Astrop, Brackley,
“ June 6, 1853.

“ SIR,

“ I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter respecting the repairs at Fritwell chancel. What is necessary shall be done, but I hope at no distant period to restore it in a proper way. I fear there is not the least chance of the church being at present restored, as the ratepayers are not in a temper to contribute anything in any shape, and as to the proprietors, the principal property in the parish is in Chancery, and another belongs to the Incumbent of Souldern, from either of which we may expect nothing, and on myself would fall the expense of the chancel. An estimate was lately made, but as no plans were forwarded to me, I have no means of judging what was intended to be done, or rather what was proposed.

“ Yr obed^t serv^t,
“ W. WILLES.”

It was under these discouraging circumstances that Mr. York, soon after his institution to the vicarage, set about a thorough restoration of the ruined fabric. The tower and north wall of the chancel were rebuilt (the former being a simple copy of the original); new roofs and seats replaced the old ones, these also following the original designs. Happily nothing unworthy of a true restoration was permitted here. The only alteration in the fabric was the removal of the original small and low chancel arch, and the substitution of the present larger one in its place; and the only addition was the heating apparatus. The architect of the restoration was G. F. Street, Esq., and the cost of the work done exceeded £2,000, contributed by the landowners, resident parishioners and neighbours, aided by grants from the church-building societies. It was a red-letter day in the church's calendar when on Whit Monday, June 5, 1865, Bishop Wilberforce, attended by a long array of surpliced clergy, and an effective choir, reopened the renovated building for public worship.

There are three bells in the tower, which are rung on the upper floor ; but there are spaces in the framework to make up a peal of six. The bells were rehung by Messrs. White of Appleton in 1865.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Inscriptions on Bells.</i>	<i>Diameter in inches.</i>	<i>Estimated Weight. Cwts.</i>
1	ROBERT ATTON MADE ME 1612	30½	5½
2	RIX MAP GI CM A M AO A On waist of bell : G. MEARS & Co., FOUNDERS, LONDON, 1865.	31	6½
3	1618 RA Sanctus bell, 13 inches diameter, undated, but an old bell and the crown drilled.	35½	8

The clock has a long pendulum, which beats two seconds. The escapement part is new. " Repaired by J. Tomlinson, Bicester, 1843."

In 1877 the old organ, long used in the church, was remodelled at a cost of £130, and rededicated at a special service in that year.

ST. FRIDESWYDE'S PRIORY.

" About the year of our Lord 727, as authors say, lived in the city of Oxford a prince (or as Malmesbury hath, a king) named Didan, one of incomparable honesty and virtues, who by his wife Safride of a Saxon family, had an only daughter, called Frideswyde born at this place, and by her parents brought up in all manner of honest and liberall breeding befitting her descent."¹ Not long before his death the good old man built a church in Oxford, which he dedicated to the honour of the Holy Trinity, the Virgin Mary and All Saints, and then committed to the care of his daughter Frideswyde, that she might exercise her devotions therein. He then caused his daughter to take upon herself the profession of a nun. She soon persuaded twelve virgins of noble descent to follow her example, and to submit themselves to her as their Abbess or Superior. After her death the Pope, hearing of her fame and virtues, and how that by her means a nunnery had been founded, canonized her for a saint, and caused her name to be inscribed in the rubric and her life in the legends. Thus " becoming notable to all Christendome," several churches both in England and other countries were dedicated to her memory. Many days and troubles passed over St. Frideswide's Church or its site. It was wholly or partially burnt in the massacre of the Danes in 1002 and in 1015. It was then rebuilt and made a " cell " or dependency of the great Monastery of Abingdon, being changed into a house of Secular Canons. They were dispossessed after the Conquest, when a new Norman Church was raised upon the foundations of the former Saxon one. These foundations still exist, and form part of the structure of Christ Church Cathedral.

To this Priory Robert Foliot, the first known of that name, who held one of the manors of Fritwell, gave the advowson of this Parish Church. This gift was confirmed by Pope Alexander III. in 1159,² and by the Bishop of the diocese (Robert Chesney) in 1160.

¹ See A. Wood's City of Oxford, Religious Orders and Houses, vol. II., p. 122 (Oxford Historical Society).

² Kennett's P. A., sub. h. a^o. The Charter confirms to the

monks of St. Frideswide the village of Pidenton, "ecclesiam "quoque de Fretwella," etc.

"Robert, by the grace of God, Bishop of Lincoln, to all the sons of the Catholic Church. Ratifying the grant which Robert Foliot is known to have made to our beloved sons the Canons Regular of St. Frideswide, Oxford, of the Church of Fretwell, we grant to them the same Church with all its appurtenances, as the same Robert granted it to them, in perpetual alms, and we confirm it, and by the attestation of our seal make secure, saving the right of Ralph the priest, so long as he survives in a secular habit, and saving the dignity of the Church of Lincoln in all things."

Twenty years later it was further confirmed by Ralph Foliot, after succeeding to his father's estate "in free alms to hold as fully as they have held it in the time of his father or himself for the health of his own soul, and that of his wife Hawyse,"¹ and in 1219 Henry Foliot made a final surrender, conveying the advowson to Prior Simon, and quit-claiming all his right in it by a separate deed of release, for which benefit he and his heirs were admitted to a place in all the prayers and alms of the house.²

In 1199 King John confirmed the grants of this, and all the other churches, which the Priory held in Oxfordshire.³

The Priory of St. Frideswide soon exhibited the grasping spirit, which characterized so many of the monasteries at that time in their dealings with the churches under their charge. Manassch Arsie, the feudal lord of this manor, had founded a Priory at Cogges in this county, and among its endowments he had given two garbes or sheaves of tithes in the demesne lands of Gilbert Pipard in this parish.⁴ The Priory of St. Frideswide soon set up a claim to these. A long dispute followed, which was at last set at rest by a full chapter of clergy presided over by the Archdeacon of Oxford, in favour of the claimants in 1166.

"Richard, Archdeacon of Oxford, to all the sons of Holy Mother Church. Greeting. Know all ye that the Controversy, which has been long agitated between the Church of St. Frideswide, and the Church of Cogges upon two garbes of tithe from the demesne of Gilbert Pippard of Fritwell, has been settled in our presence, and that of the whole Chapter in the Deanery of Stokes, by such a conclusion for ever; if indeed the Church of St. Frideswide will pay annually to the Church of Cogges for the same tithe two shillings or one besantine within the Octaves of St. Michael."⁵

But the Priory did a more grievous wrong by appropriating to their own use the larger part of the property of this Parish Church, leaving only the remainder for the maintenance of their vicar, whom they appointed to undertake the spiritual care of the parish. The vicar was frequently a deacon or even a sub-deacon, and by an arrangement made with the rector of the adjoining church of Souldern the parishioners were obliged to resort to that church for the administration of the Sacraments, and other special offices. The south aisle of Souldern Church is still known as the Fritwell aisle, and the pathway from Fritwell to Souldern is still called "The Church Way."

THE VICARS.

The first known of the priests in charge of this parish was *Ralph*—one of the secular clergy, who was living in 1160, the year when the advowson of this church was given to St. Frideswide's

¹ Printed in the *Monasticon*, vol. II., p. 148.

² *Chartulary of St. Frideswide*.

³ *Charters*, 1 John, part I., membr. 8. Record Office.

⁴ Gilbert Pipard's demesne is mentioned in Robert Foliot's

deed of gift. This gift was confirmed in the year 1109 by King Henry I.

⁵ Register of St. Frideswide MS., cart. 466, given in Kennett's P. A., Ans. MCLXVI.

Priory. After the impropriation of the church the vicars for several years were monks of the Priory, who were sent to undertake the cure without any institution or induction, and were removable at the will of the Convent, whose names therefore do not appear in the Registers of the Bishops. But after the ordination of the vicarage the clergy of this church became perpetual vicars, and were duly instituted, their names and the dates of their institutions being entered in the Lincoln Registers.

PERPETUAL VICARS.

" 1226. *Bartholomew de Bedewind*, Capellane.

" Barthol. de Bedewind, Capellan ad ppet. vicar in Eccles. de Fretewell auct concilii ordinatam."

To mark this as the first institution after the ordination of the vicarage the profits of the vicarage are then set forth.

1233. *Stephen*—

In the course of the dispute in this year about the tithes which the Rector of Souldern claimed of some land in Fritwell, this vicar managed in some way not known to fall under the displeasure of the authorities, which led to his excommunication. Two years later, he submitted; and his submission was testified by the Prior of Brackley, and the Rector of Aynhoe.

1245. 4 Kal. Oct. *Geoffrey de Leominster*, Capellane.

1265. *Edmund de Ryngertede*,¹ Priest, on the death of Geoffrey.

1292. 16 Kal. Nov. *John de Shirinton*, Capellane, on the resignation of Edmund.

1299. " Within this same year the Prior of St. Frideswide presented a Clerk to the Church of Fretwell, Com. Oxon."²

1317. *Richard de Hunsingore*, Clerk.

This appointment appears to have been a gross abuse of patronage, and a simoniacal transaction.

" John, Bishop of the aforesaid diocese of Lincoln, to our sons beloved in Christ, the Prior and Convent of St. Fretheswyde, Oxford, Greeting, grace and benediction, That you may deliver up and hand over the Church of Fretwell of our diocese, which you hold to your own proper uses, to Master Richard de Hunsingore, clerk, for the term of five years at a fixed rent, and the same Master Richard may so receive it, for certain lawful causes explained to us, which we approve (so far as is in us we maintain our fair judgment) provided that in the meanwhile the said Church be not defrauded in its due services, and the cure of souls be in no way neglected. In testimony whereof we have caused these our letters patent to be made for you. Given at Newark xvi. Kl. Decemb., 1317, in the year of our pontificate 18."

1348. 10 Kal. Dec. *John de Attehull*, als *de Curtlyngton*.

Nich. Brode de Buck, pbr. pr. p. Prior et Conv. Mon. St. Edburg Burcester. ad vicar. eccl. de Burcester resig. Joh. Attehull de Curthyngton ex causa pmut, cum vicar. de Fritewell. 16 Kal. Dec. 1348.

1349. *Thomas ate Hath*, als *atte Nassh*, Priest.

(9 Kal. Dec.) On the death of Sir John, the last vicar.

¹ This name occurs in the Charter of Eversley, in the possession of Magdalen College, Oxford.

² Register of Bishop Sutton.

1363. *Ralph de Appeltre*, Priest.
 (9 Kal. Sept.) (On the resignation of Thomas atte Nash, by reason of an exchange with the church of Ardley.)
 (?) *Sir Hugh* —
 1407. *Richard Sutton*, Canon of St Frideswide's.
 (Feb. 2.) (On the death of Sir Hugh.)
 (?) *Sir John Witteney*.
 1435. *Sir Nicholas Aldreswell*, Priest.
 (Jan. 5.) (On the resignation of Sir J. Witteney.)
 1441. *John Usburn*, Priest.
 (Oct. 22.) (On the death of Sir N. Addewell.)
 1455. *John Wright*, Deacon.
 (Jan. 30.) (On the resignation of J. Usborn.)
 (?) *Lewis Tolley*.
 1497. *Sir Richard Wynter*, Priest.
 (Apr. 7.) (On the death of L. Tolley.)
 1498. *Sir Robert Wellys*, Priest.
 (Nov. 3.) (On the resignation of Sir R. Wynter.)
 1500. *Sir Henry Molyneux*, Clerk.
 (Apr. 7.) (On the death of Sir R. Wellys.)
 1519. *Sir Robert Brice*, Canon of St Frideswide's.
 (Jan. 12.) (On the death of H. Molyneux.)
 Bryse, Robert, regular canon, sup. for B. Can. L., 11 July, 1523, adm., 13 July.
 1524. *Sir Robert Hevelde* al^s *Aveld*, Chaplain.
 (Sep. 3.) (Presented by John Brome, John Davey, and John Cooke, on the resignation of Sir R. Brice by reason of a grant from St Frideswide's Priory.)

PRESENTED BY OTHER PATRONS.

After the dissolution of St Frideswide's Priory the King, Henry VIII., at once seized the advowson, and quickly exercised the right of presentation.

1521. *Sir Nicholas Tarelton* al^s *Carleton*, Chaplain.
 (July 8.) (Presented by the King by reason of the suppression of the monastery of St Frideswide on the death of Sir R. Aveld.)

In the following year the King gave the advowson to his college at Oxford. This is mentioned among his gifts in 1532:

"Ac advocaciones et Patronatus ecclesiarum sive rectoriarum de Bynsey, Hedyngton, "Marston Churchehill, Frytwell et Ellesfeld in comitatu nostro Oxon prædicto."¹

This gift was confirmed in 1537,² but a few years later it was revoked, and in 1552 the

¹ Rymer's *Fœdera*, vol. XIV., p. 443.

² "King Henry VIII. by letters sealed confirms the union and incorporation of the Churches or Chapels of Hedyngton, Merston, Byndesey, Churchill, Frytewell, Ellsfylde, Wornall, Oclee, Boyll, Borstall, Overwinchendon, etc., with others in the dioceses of Lichfield and York, etc., formerly belonging to the

"suppressed monasteries of St. Frideswide, Tyckford, Littlemore, and Canwall; made by Thomas Crumwell, K.G., to King Henry VIII.'s college in Oxford.

"Dated 31 July, 1537, and 29th year of his reign, with seal" (Calendar of Charter Rolls, etc., in Bodleian Library).

advowson was sold. Since that time it has with few exceptions passed by purchase to the successive owners of the manor.

- 155 $\frac{1}{2}$. *John Shawe.*
 (Feb. 28.) (Presented by John Kynge, Gent., on the death of N. Carleton.)
 156 $\frac{1}{2}$. *Christopher Allsop.*
 (March 21.) (Presented by George York, Gent. of Brackley, on the resignation of J. Shawe.)
 1582. *James Byseley al^a Bisley.*
 (Dec. 5.) (Presented by Edward Yorke, Gent.¹)
 1608.² *John Hunt, M.A.*
 (Oct. 19.) (Presented by the Crown.)
 1609. The same.
 (April 8.) (Presented by Edward Yorke, Gent. of Frankton, Co. Warwick. Resident through the 30 years of his incumbency. A son of his was baptized at Fritwell on Nov. 11, 1611, and a daughter on Jan. 16, 1613.)
 "Mr. John Hunt, Vicar of Ffritwell, was buried the 16th of Aprill, 1639."
 1639. *Michael Thomas, B.A.*
 (April 24.) (Presented by (?) on the death of J. Hunt.)
 1654. *John Dashfeilde.*
 (Matriculated on March 12, 161 $\frac{1}{2}$, at Magdalen Hall from Surrey, pleb. fil., aged 16."³)

He was without doubt intruded by the Parliamentary Triers, for no mention is made of the cession, or death of his predecessor. The parish registers were carelessly kept during his incumbency, his name never once appearing in them; and a new vicar was appointed in the year following the Restoration.

1661. March 30. *John Ellis, M.A.*

Son of J. E. of Raveningham, Norfolk, Gent. Admitted to Caius Coll., Cambridge, 15 July, 164 $\frac{1}{2}$, aged 14. Presented to this vicarage by Samuel Sandys, jun^r, Esq. After coming into residence he was admitted a M.A. on 9 July, 1661, at Oxford.

(?)⁴ *Theophilus Tylden al^s Tilden.*

Matriculated on June 16, 1610, at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, from Kent, pleb. f., aged 19.

169 $\frac{0}{1}$. Jan. 16. *Robert Wake, M.A.*

Youngest son of William of Piddington, Northamptonshire, Bart.; matriculated at Brasenose Coll., Oxford, 21 March, 168 $\frac{1}{2}$; Scholar of Trinity Coll., 1685; B.A. 1687, M.A. 1690; Fellow of Trinity, 1693; presented to this vicarage by Samuel Jones, Henry Edmonds, and Francis Crane, Esq^{rs}. on the death of T. Tilden. In the first year of his residence he introduced a third celebration of the Holy Communion on Whitsunday,⁵ there having been previously, for many years, only two

¹ "Mr. Edward Yorke, Gent., is the known Patron of the "Church of Fritwell in the County of Oxon, June 9th, A^o Dñi "1584" (Memorandum in Church Register in Mr. Bisley's handwriting).

² Some hand has written on a flyleaf of the first Register Book of Fritwell:

"James Bisley, vicar, 1584 to 1605.

"John Hunt, vicar, 1605 to 1639."

The dates of institution given in the text are from the Institution Book of the Diocese, and are doubtless correct.

³ Register of the University of Oxford.

⁴ Mr. Ellis signed the churchwardens' accounts in 1666, and Mr. Tilden in 1669. The name of "Mr. Tyldin" is written among the vicars on the flyleaf of the parish register.

⁵ The first entry for bread and wine on Whitsunday in the churchwardens' accounts is made in this year, 1692.

celebrations yearly, and in 1703 a fourth celebration at Michaelmas. In 1694 a considerable amount of repair was done to the Parish Church. In 1695 Mr. Wake began a new Register Book, attending to what had for many years been neglected, and in the next year a careful account of the collections made under briefs.¹ In 1699 he married.

"Robt Wake, vicar of this parish, and Eliz. Grimfield, of St Peter's parish, in Marlborough, " Wilts were married July 23, 1699."

His eldest child was born and baptized at Fritwell.

"Robert, the son of Robert Wake, Gent., and Eliz., his wife, was born on the second, " baptized on the twelfth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred."

Three years later he received a well-deserved preferment from the Bishop of Peterborough to the rectory of Farthingstone, Northamptonshire. In 1724 he was appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to the deanery of Bocking, Essex; and subsequently to the rectory of Brasted, Kent, with chapelry of Cuckfield, Sussex; and lastly, by the Dean and Chapter of Windsor to the vicarage of Ogbourne, Wilts. There are two parishes of this name, Ogbourne St Andrew, and Ogbourne St George, but in neither of them is any trace now to be found of Mr. Wake's connection with them.

While resident at Fritwell he published two sermons:

(1) "A Rationale Upon Some Texts of Scripture" (8vo., 1701).

(2) "On Malachi III. vv. 8, 9, on Tythe Stealing" (8vo., 1703).

1703. Nov. 5. *John Davys*, al^s *Davies*, M.A., son of Matthew D. of Chicks Grove, Wilts, Gent.; matriculated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, 20 July, 1693, aged 15; Demy of Magdalen Coll., 1693; B.A., 1697; M.A., 1700. Presented to this vicarage by Samuel Jones of Waltham. He was probably resident during the first three years of his incumbency, but in 1706 he was chosen Vice Principal of Hart Hall, Oxford, and the name of "S. Ashbridge, Curate," first appears in the Parish Registers. In the next year the Whitsuntide celebration of the Holy Sacrament was omitted, and the evils of non-residence began. In 1711 he resigned this vicarage. He was subsequently preferred by James, third Earl of Northampton, to the rectory of Castle Ashby in Northamptonshire, to which he was instituted on April 16, 1719. His name is signed at the bottom of each page of the Church Register of that parish until the end of the year 1736, and his successor in that rectory was instituted on October 29, 1740. There is no entry of his burial, nor any tablet to his memory at Castle Ashby.

1714. March 15. *John Palmer*, M.A., son of John P. of Addlethorpe, Lincolnshire, cler., matriculated at University Coll., Oxford, 21 Dec., 1699, aged 15; Demy of Magdalen Coll., 1701; B.A., 1705; M.A., 1708; Fellow, 1710. Presented to this vicarage by the same patron as his predecessor. He took his degree of B.D. in 1717, of D.D. in 1730. He held various college offices: Senior Dean of Arts, 1717; Bursar, 1718-26;² Dean of Divinity, 1722; Vice President, 1725. These offices kept him resident in Oxford in term time, but he personally performed his duties at Fritwell, and was probably resident here during the vacations. He resigned this vicarage in 1729, when he was presented by his college to the rectory of Appleton in Berkshire. His tenure of that rectory was short. No signature of his appears in any of the registers of that parish, and the only record now existing there is of his burial.

¹ These commence in 1696, and with a break of two years (1707-8) are continued until 1734. "Socius Dignissimus 1718. Anno eodem Bursarii Dignitatem summa cum Integritate sustinuit" (Entry on the flyleaf of Fritwell Church Register).

² "Johannes Palmer, Vicarius Fret et Collegii Magdalenensis well Church Register).

" 1735.

" The Rev. Dr. Palmer, Rector of this parish was buried June y^e 13th."

1729. Dec. 20. *William Vaughan*, M.A., of Welsh descent, of Jesus Coll., Oxford; B.A., Oct. 17, 1721; M.A., June 5, 1724. Presented to this vicarage by George Wheate, Esq., when he was holding the vicarage of the adjoining church of North Aston.

" William Vaughan, vicar of North Aston, was inducted into Fritwell Church, the 30 day of " December, 1729, e Coll. Jesu, Oxon."¹

He was resident at North Aston. One of the good acts of his ministry at Fritwell was to revive the four celebrations of the Holy Communion, and to add a fifth on Palm Sunday. He was likewise vigilant in the baptism of adults, and in enforcing Church discipline.

" 1744. I baptiz'd Will^m Warner, who had been brought up a Quaker at near 60 years of age.

" 1754. Sarah Clarke a Black-woman servant to M^{rs}. Dasent, being near forty years of age " was baptiz'd June y^e 27th, 1754.

" M^{rs}. Vaughan, Miss Holford and y^e Rev. Mr. Hakewell special witnesses.

" 1756. Peter, bastard son of Peter Collingridge and Jane Jervase was privately baptiz'd " April 16th, 1756, and brought to Church May y^e 26th.

" I suff'r'd them to do private Penance.

" 1757. Francis, a bastard of Mary Newell, baptiz'd Dec^r. y^e 11th, 1757. Publick " Penance."²

Mr. Vaughan's plain handwriting appears in a careful keeping of the church registers during the whole of his incumbency.

" William Vaughan, Vicar of this parish, was buried May y^e 4th, 1740."²

His widow continued her residence at Fritwell until her death.

" M^{rs}. Vaughan, Widow of the Rev. Mr. Vaughan, late Vicar of this parish, was buried June " y^e 16th, 1745."

His daughter also was buried here.

" M^{rs}. Anne Hall, late wife of Mr. Hall, Attorney at law in Swallow St. London, and sister of " Mr. Vaughan, Vicar of this parish, was buried Nov. y^e 27th, 1754."²

1740. Oct. 25. *William Vaughan*, B.A., son of the last Vicar. Presented by Sir Baldwin Wake, Bart., guardian of Chas. Wake Jones, Gent. Matriculated at New Coll., Oxford; B.A., June 19, 1734; M.A., 1756.

He held this Vicarage twenty-two years, but no marks remain of his residence except a single entry in the Book of Homilies belonging to the Parish Church.

" Mr. Vaughan went away from this Vicarage St. Michael, 1762."²

1763. March 8. *James Hakewell*, B.A.

Presented by William Wake of Norfolk. Matriculated at Trinity Coll., Oxford; B.A., Dec. 17, 1759. Vicar of Cumnor, and of North Aston. Curate of Ardley from 1758 to 1761.

He has left two notes of his life at Fritwell in the church registers.

" Jacobus Hakewill duxit in uxorem ancillam suam Catherinam Burman ortam a parenti- " bus in hac villa degentibus, puellam multum amantem, nec minus multum amatam.

¹ This entry, and the same in Latin, he wrote on the flyleaf of the Church Register under the names of his two immediate predecessors.

² Entries in Parish Registers.

“ ‘Ne sit ancillæ tibi amor pudori,’ Hor. May with truth be said of her, 1 Oct., 1771.

“ Rara avis in terris fuit illa, et jure dolendum est Sæcula Phœnices nulla tulisse duos.”¹

“ On the death of William Andrews, Clerk, I put into the place Edward Busby, May 23, 1763. Look to the Burials of that year. On account of Edward Busby’s blindness and his other infirmities I have put into the Clerk’s place Ric^d. Trench: a place of very small profit indeed, but w^{ch} requires the property’s of a good reader and singer also; and as I observe his humanity to the old Clerk by letting him get assistance for half the salary I leave to Edward Busby five shillings and to Job Andrew 2s. 6^d. to be paid them at my death, and other charges that to y^e Clerk are usual.”

“ 1798. Dec. 21. Died aged 83 the Rev. James Hakewill of Fritwell in this county. He was a man of good understanding, an attentive observer of nature in her animal and vegetable productions, passionately fond of y^e cultivation of trees, and exerting himself with much success in procuring numbers to be replanted. Throughout the whole of his long life he enjoyed an uncommon share of good health, which he attributed to early rising. He was lineally descended from that great lawyer and antiquary William Hakewill, M.P. in the time of Charles I., the registrar of the Royal Society at their revival in 1614, and author of several works of much repute.”¹

1799. May 27. *Henry Linton*, D.D.

Presented by John Freke Willes, Esq., on the death of J. Hakewill. Matriculated at Magdalen Coll., Oxford; B.A., Feb. 5, 1774; M.A., Oct. 23, 1776; B.D., Feb. 7, 1786; D.D., Jan. 26, 1797. An arrangement had been made about the middle of the last century between the patrons of this and North Aston vicarages, that, as the two vicarages were but slenderly endowed, they should be consolidated, and held jointly, with alternate rights of presentation. There was no legal confirmation of this arrangement, and it was finally broken by Mr. Linton resigning Fritwell in 1813, and retaining North Aston. Mr. Linton was not resident in either of his Oxfordshire parishes, but in a College living in Wiltshire.

Nicholas Dunn, Curate, 1819-20.

1833. Oct. 28. *Burgess Lambert*, M.A.

Presented by W. Willes, Esq., on the resignation of H. Linton.

1836. June 25. *William Rawlings*, M.A.

Presented by the same patron, on the resignation of B. Lambert; Vicar of Thenford, near Banbury; Chaplain of the Bicester Union House. He was suspended from the charge of this parish in 1852 by Bishop Wilberforce for a breach of discipline in marrying a parishioner to his deceased wife’s sister, when the following Curates were appointed:

(1) *Cyril William Wood* (1852),

Univ. Coll., Durham; B.A., 1842; M.A., 1845; Deacon, 1844; Priest, 1846; Curate of Finmere, 1846-52. At the time of his coming to Fritwell, where he resided in the Manor House with Mrs. Palmer, he was a candidate for the office of Warden in the Collegiate School, which had then been founded by Bishop Chapman, the first Bishop of Colombo, in Ceylon.

It will not be out of place here to record some notes by the Bishop of his subsequent ministry, as evidence of what manner of man he was, when for six years he did good service in two parishes of this Deanery, and took his wife from it.

¹ Upcott’s Collections for Oxon. in British Museum.

"Mr. Wood and his newly-married wife, a sister of Sir Roundell Palmer, now Lord Selborne, arrived in Ceylon full of zeal and earnestness for the great work before them. Mr. Wood works so hard, and throws his whole heart and thought so entirely into his work, that, not being strong, I fear he may spend himself in this climate before he is aware of it.

"Mr. Wood's great earnestness has much influence with the younger and native clergy. He has proposed having the Holy Communion every Saturday for them, as they are so scattered on the Sunday, and the native clergy (who were at that time for the most part only in deacon's orders) seldom enjoy the blessing, their flocks not being in a fit state for frequent celebrations.

"In all Mr. Wood's efforts for the good of natives and English alike, he was helped and seconded by his excellent wife. Notwithstanding her failing health, she carried on a girls' school near the College, and much devolved on her, as the wife of the Warden, in the domestic arrangements for the boarders.

"Mrs. Wood's health unhappily broke down completely at the close of the first year of her residence in Ceylon, when, to the great regret of all her friends, she was compelled to return to England as a last hope. The Font in Colombo Cathedral was her thankoffering for her recovery from her dangerous illness, and for the birth of her eldest child; and it still remains a proof of her love and devotion, and, now that she has passed away, as the memorial in her adopted home of the gifted and saintly Eleanor Wood. Mr. Wood also presented to the Cathedral the organ, which he had brought with him from England; and this instrument continued for some years in use for the services of the Church. Scarcely six months after Mrs. Wood's departure, the Warden was compelled by his own dangerous illness to follow her, hoping that, if health were restored, both might return together. But this hope was not to be realized, for on a return of his illness some little time afterwards, Mr. Wood was compelled to give up the idea of any further work in a tropical climate."¹

(2) *Horatio Walmisley* (1852-4),

of Trinity and Sidney Sussex Colleges, Cambridge; B.A., 1847; M.A., 1850; Deacon, 1848; Priest, 1849. Removed to the Curacy of Stratton Audley. Now Vicar of Iffley, near Oxford.

(3) *Edward Gordon*, B.A. (1856-60),

of C.C.C., Cambridge; B.A., 1853; Deacon, 1855; Priest, 1856; Rector of Kildale, Yorks, 1860-67; Vicar of Atwick, Yorks, 1867.

1863. *Samuel York*, M.A.

Presented by the same patron.² Scholar of Exeter Coll., Oxford; B.A., 1857; M.A., 1859; Deacon, 1858; Priest, 1859. Curate of Preston, in Lancashire, 1858-61.

His name stands out in this list of clergy worthy of honour, as the restorer of a ruined fabric, and of due order in the services of the Parish Church, as the founder of the parish school, as very diligent in all pastoral work, and ever ready to promote the good, temporal and spiritual, of his parishioners. Amid general regret, he resigned this vicarage in 1876, when he was preferred to the vicarage of Ascot, under Wychwood, Oxon., by Bishop Mackarness. In 1883 he was preferred to the Rectory of Fifield, which he now holds.

1876. *Reginald Remington*, M.A.

On his own presentation.

¹ Memorials of Bishop Chapman, 1892.

² His father had bought the advowson, but his name did not appear as patron, for some reason unknown.

1883. May 5. *Robert Pickman Norwood*, B.A.

Presented by R. Remington, on his own resignation. B.A., Oxon., 1874; Assistant-Master of Magdalen School, Oxford, 1874-83; Deacon, 1875; Priest, 1878.

THE PARISH CLERK.

The Minor Orders are referred to in all those rubrics of our Prayer-Book in which the words "ministers and clerks" occur, "clerk" being "cleric" written short, whether they be sub-deacons, acolytes, servers, readers, or singers, attendant upon the priest after the custom of the primitive Church. But after the Reformation the Minor Orders, from the circumstances of the times, fell into abeyance, and the various offices which they fulfilled became merged in one person, the parish "cleric" or "clerk."¹ The parish clerk, then, had his desk or place of honour in the church, immediately below that of the priest. He gave out the hymns and the notices, led the responses and singing, prepared the font for Holy Baptism, and the elements for the Holy Eucharist, had the care of the sacred vessels, and attended on the priest at all times of his ministrations, thus becoming the sub-deacon, the server,² the singer, and the doorkeeper in one. He was generally dressed in a black gown, or sombre clothing, and in this parish for some years he wore a surplice³ in the time of divine service.

THE VICARAGE.

Our parochial churches were at first all rectories possessed of tithes, glebe and offerings. The vicarage originated from appropriation, *i.e.*, the giving or assigning rectories or churches to religious houses. For some time after the Norman Conquest patrons were in the habit of giving the churches of which they had the advowsons to monasteries, the monks obtaining license from the King and the Pope to be perpetual incumbents of any churches given to them without institution or induction. The effect of this was to take these churches out of the control of the Bishop. "Consequently there was little or no residence kept on such cures, no hospitality, no alms; the monks despatching their members at times from the monastery and performing divine offices at the several churches." The cures were often scandalously neglected, and the fabrics of the churches fell into decay. To remedy this, it was enacted by the Council of Westminster (1102): "That monks do not accept of churches without the Bishop's consent, nor so rob those that are given them of their revenues that the priests who serve them be in want of necessaries." In spite of the difficulties created for them by this canon, the monks continued to obtain donations of churches, the number of which in England eventually amounted to 3,845, when the whole of the benefices were computed at 9,284. Nunneries, the military orders, cathedral churches and Bishops all seized upon the parochial churches and exacted the tithes, leaving the parishioners often to fare badly.

In 1173 Archbishop Richard published a constitution: "*Nullus presumat intrare ecclesiam absque presentatione advocati ecclesiæ et impersonatione diocesani episcopi vel officialis ejus per ipsum*"; and in 1179 the Lateran Council under Alexander III. ordained that the Bishops were to require the monastery to assign to the vicar a sum sufficient for paying the episcopal dues, and enjoying an honest maintenance, and that vicars were not to be removable, or their stipends

¹ See a paper read at the Church Congress in 1866 by the late Archdeacon Hale.

² See *History of Middleton*, p. 68. In Lincoln Cathedral at the present time two "clerics," and at Lichfield a priest and a

"cleric," sing the Litany as far as the Lord's Prayer, the priest continuing after them.

³ Churchwardens' Accounts in the year 1593.

alterable at the will of the appropriator or rector. This canon, however, was steadily resisted by the English monasteries, which constantly refused any perpetual alienation of the tithes and dues to a vicar, but preferred to treat him simply as their curate, removable at their will.

The Council of Westminster, held A.D. 1200, under Archbishop Hubert Walter, enforced the Lateran Canon by directing "all the religious to present priests to the Bishops for the churches "which they hold not by an absolute right, who shall be answerable to the Bishops for the care of "the people, and accountable to the religious for the temporals."

The diocese of Lincoln was practically without a bishop from 1206 to 1213, whereby the effectual enforcement of this canon was prevented; but when Hugh de Welles came to the see in 1213 he stirred vigorously and at once in the matter. Bishop Hugh de Welles played a not inconsiderable part in the history of the Church of England in the stormy days of King John, and left his mark in many ways, both structural and disciplinary, on the diocese of Lincoln. Of his works the greatest and most valuable was the general and formal rescue from monkish greed and selfishness of a portion of the tithes of the churches, which by one method or another the "religious" had appropriated. This he effected by the regular establishment of vicarages.¹

The method pursued in allotting vicarages was as follows. An inquisition was made in the chapters of the rural deans into the value of the rectories, and the competent portion to be assigned to the vicarages. A return was then made to the bishop, who was to approve and confirm the acts of the chapters, or to alter them as he thought fit; then the allotment was entered in the bishop's register. The amount usually assigned to the vicar was about one-third of the profits of the benefice derived from the altar dues and tithes, as well as a house and some glebe. He had to bear some part of the burdens incident to ecclesiastical benefices. His salary commonly amounted to five or six marks. The monastery was also often charged to provide him an assistant.²

The following was the Ordination of the Vicarage of this church, as entered in the Bishop's Register:

"Ffrechewell. Vicaria in Ecclesia de Frechewell, que est Prioris et Conventus Sancte "Fredeswid, Oxon, auctortate concilii ordinata consistit in omnibus obvencionibus altaris et "minutis decimis totius parochie et in decimis bladi et feni et omnibus aliis decimis provenientibus "de tribus virgatis terre in eadem villa quas Ricardus filius Radulphi tenet. Et in uno crofto cum "messuagio sine prato tamen adjacente. Et valet, vicaria V marc. Totalis autem ecclesia X marc "et sufficit unus capellanus."

Hence we learn that at the beginning of the XIIIth century the Vicar had for his residence a manse on the site of the present vicarage house (the adjoining meadow not being included in his occupation); all the small tithes of the parish; the tithes of corn and hay from three virgates of land within the parish, and all church offerings and oblations. The value of the whole income amounted to five marks.³ A mark (13s. 4d.) represented about £8 of present money. It was not a coin, but money of account. The vicar had no assistant.

¹ The Book of Vicarages, called "Liber antiquus des Ordinationibus Vicariorum tempore Hugonis Wells Lincolnensis "Episcopi 1209-35," was written for the most part in 1218, and records the establishment of nearly three hundred vicarages. The vicarages ordained in this Deanery were Bicester, Chesterton, Fritwell, Kirtlington, Stoke Lyne, and Weston.

² From A Sketch of the History of Vicarages, by Dr. Pegge,

a Canon of Lincoln, and a famous antiquary of the last century, given in the Historical Introduction to Hugh de Wells' Register, by Canon Perry, edited by A. Gibbons.

³ By the Canons of the Council of Oxford, held under Archbishop Langton in 1222, the sum specified as a fitting maintenance for the vicar is five marks "except in Wales, where vicars are "content with less." See History of Bicester, pp. 96. 97.

A peculiar feature in this village is that the residence of the clergyman is distant from the church. This is probably accounted for by the supposition that, when Robert Foliot rebuilt the original Saxon church, he gave a piece of ground on his estate towards its endowment, and that on this a residence for the parish priest was built, the land immediately around the church then belonging to another manor.

To augment the original endowment Fulco de Banville gave in 1229 to this church 10½ acres of land. By this and other gifts the vicar's income was slightly increased.

The first-fruits and tenths of all ecclesiastical benefices in England had for a long time been paid to the See of Rome, but in 1288 Pope Nicholas IV. granted the tenths for six years to King Edward I. towards defraying the expenses of a crusade, and that these might be collected to their full value, the King caused a valuation roll to be drawn up, which was completed in 1291. This vicarage was then estimated to be worth £viiij xiijs. ivd. per annum.

This taxation was accepted as correct fifty years later at the taxation of the ninth in 1341, "the glebe with hay being worth xl." All the taxes from ecclesiastical benefices to our Kings, as also to the Popes, were regulated by the taxation of 1291 until 27 Henry VIII., when a new survey was completed.

"Fritwell.

"The Dean and Canons of the King's College in Oxford are } Reckoned within the place
"appropriators there, and within the aforesaid College they } aforesaid.
"are charged with the same.

	£	s.	d.
"Nicholas Tarleton is the perpetual vicar there, and his vicar- }	viiij	o	o
"age is worth yearly in common years }			
Total	viiij	o	o

"Payments.

"Namely, in Procurations and Synodals to the Archdeacon }	x	viiij
"of Oxford of old paid yearly }		
"The whole allocution ...	x	viiij
"And there remains clear ...	vij	ix iiij
"Tenth part for the King ...		<u>xiiij xj½.</u>

On June 9th, 1584, the following memorandum was entered in the church register :

"That there is belonging to the Vicar of Fritwell in the County of Oxford all manner of
"Tythes, excepting the Tythes of Corne and Hay of all the Parish excepting all the Tythe Corn
"and Hay of three yard lands now in the tenure and occupation of Robert Wise, which doth belong
"to the Vicar.

"There is due to the Vicar out of the Parsonedge of Fritwell fifty-three shillings, and four-
"pence every year to continue. Also there is due to the Vicarage all the tythe hay and corn of
"all the Closes in the town of Fritwell. Also that upon St. Mark's day the tythe lambs are taken
"up. The tenth or seventh calf is due and taken up when it is tytheable, and if not a tythe calf,
"then a shoulder of it be kil'd, and an half-penny at Martlemass if it be wean'd, also if it be sold
"the tenth penny. The Wool tythed at the Shearers either by the Todd or pound. Piggs tythed
"when they be ready to eat; for odds I give or take an halfpenny a pigg. I take up the Tythe
"Eggs upon the Wednesday before Easter, two eggs for every hen and duck, three eggs for every

"cock and drake. Two pence for every Communicant at Easter. I doe receive tythe Apples, "Crabbes, Hemp, Onions, garleck, and hopps, when they are pulled or gathered. Tythe for Honey "sold I doe receive the tenth penny when they are taken up and sold, and some honey of that "which they keep to themselves.

"By me,

"JAMES BISLEY, Vicar there."¹

To this was appended :

"Mortuaries are due by ancient custom, witnesse my hand, June 28, 1654.

"JOHN DASHFIELD, Vicar."

After the great survey in Henry VIIIth's reign, the first-fruits and tenths ceased to be forwarded to Rome, and were transferred to the Crown. In 1703 they were appropriated under the title of Queen Anne's Bounty, to the augmentation of small benefices. At the same time several of the latter were discharged from the payment of tenths.

LIVINGS DISCHARGED.

Clear yearly value.

"£34 08^s 08^d. } Fritwell V. St. Olave. Priorat Sanctæ Fridiswide, Oxon. Propr. Sir Charles
Jones Wake, Barr. Yearly Tenths, 14^s. 11^d."}

In 1718 Dr. Rawlinson wrote :

"Frithwell.

"Lord of the mannor Mr. Jones, alias Wake, of Northamptonshire, who is impropiator. "Vicar John Palmer, M.A., Fellow of Magdalen Coll., Oxon. He is allow'd £40."

"1747. There being an attempt made by Edmund Collingridge to assess this vicarage at "the rate of twenty pounds p^r annum to y^e Land Tax. By an Appeal to y^e Commissioners at "Bicester from one W. Vaughan, then vicar, it was fix'd at twelve pounds p^r annum. And this "order was signed by

"T. BRODRICK, D.D.,
"B. BATHURST, } Esq^{rs}.
"J. COKER, &c."

Mr. Vaughan's successor has appended to this :

"The above alteration was attempted to be made by a Tyrannical Steward (whom the "whole village knew to be very high and imperious) in order to distress a Protestant Priest : the "steward being a Roman Catholic."

At the award of 1808, new allotments of land having been assigned to the vicarage in lieu of tithes, the property was thus described :

"The Rev. Henry Linton, D.D., vicar.

	Acres.	R.	P.
"The Church and Yard	1	0	5
"Vicarage House, Yard, Garden, and Close	1	3	13
"1st Allotment for Tithes	56	1	27
"2nd Ditto	6	2	3
"Allotment for Tithe of old Inclosures, paying five } shillings per acre	17	1	0

¹ This is a copy of the original (which has been lost) by the same hand which has copied the registers of Mr. Bisley's time.

It has been rewritten, "Copied by John Palmer, Vicar, April "26, 1729."

"Allotment for Tithe of old Inclosures, having no common right }								ACRES R. P.
								2 0 0
								<hr/> 85 0 8."

The present value of the vicarage is :

								£ s. d.
Rent of Glebe ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	117 8 9
Fees and Easter dues	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4 0 0
								<hr/> 121 8 9

Deductions :

								£ s. d.
Parochial Rates ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2 10 0
Fire Insurance ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0 8 6
Average of Repairs ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2 0 0
								<hr/> 4 18 6

The value of this vicarage has thus remained nearly stationary through more than six centuries. The five marks originally assigned at its ordination were reckoned at £8 13s. 4d., a few years later at Pope Nicholas's taxation. This continued to be its estimated value as late as Henry VIIIth's reign, though during the interval there had been a decided increase in the value of money. If then we take thirteen as a fair multiple to bring prices in Henry VIIIth's reign to their present value ($8 \times 13 = 104$) we get to about the present value of this vicarage. No additional endowment having been given, it remains one of the poorest incumbencies in this deanery.

THE VICARAGE HOUSE.

The accommodation required by the early vicars, monks of St. Frideswide's Priory, was very slight and simple. A small manse, consisting of a hall on the ground-floor, and an upper chamber, with an external kitchen, was sufficient for their needs. Such was "the croft, and messuage" mentioned in the Ordination of the Vicarage. The married vicars of a later date required further house-room, and it was probably about the middle of the XVIth century that the greater part of the present vicarage house was built. The present house consists of two parts, evidently built at two different dates. The older part consisted of two rooms on the ground-floor, and three bedrooms above them. It is well and substantially built of local stone, the walls being two feet thick, and the alcoves, windows, etc., being good workmanship, and pointing to an early date. The more modern part consists of a kitchen and a bedroom over it, of which the workmanship is slighter and greatly inferior to the older portion. Nothing has been done by way of improvement to this house for many a long year, and it remains a single example in this deanery of what many houses of the clergy were, before they were rebuilt in the middle of the present century. A kitchen detached from the house seems to be of very early date.

THE RECTORIAL TITHES.

The great tithes, which had been impropriated by the Priory of St. Frideswide, were valued at the time of the dissolution of that house at a sum equal to about £56 per annum of modern value.

"Terre nup. ptin' Monast' Sancte Fredeswide,
 "Rectoria de Fritwell in Com. Oxon. in Decan Chipping Norton.
 "Valet in firm' rectorie cñ ōib^s et singulis suis ptin' p. annū ... £iij xiijs iiij^d

"Reps'.

"Redd' res' de rectoria de Fritwell—

"Et reman.' clar' £iij xiijs iiij^d."

This property was given to Cardinal Wolsey, and when he founded his college at Oxford on the site of St. Frideswyde's Priory, he gave to it all the property which had belonged to that and the other religious houses whose dissolution he had effected.¹ But when he fell under the King's displeasure this property was forfeited to the Crown. Three years later the King gave it back to the college, which was henceforth to bear his own name. In 1545 Henry VIIIth suppressed his new foundation, and this advowson again lapsed to the Crown. It remained in the King's hands until, in the last year of Edward VIth's reign, the following grant was made:

"The King to all, etc., greeting. Know ye that for the sum of £1775 11^s 8^d of lawful money "of England well and faithfully paid beforehand into the hands of Edmund Pekkam Knight for "our use by Thomas Cecyll of London Gentleman, and Philip Bolde of London aforesaid "Clotheworker, of which sum of money we acknowledge ourselves to be fully satisfied, and that "the same Thomas and Philip, their heirs, executors and administrators are quit and exonerated "thereof by the presents, we of our special favour, and by our own certain knowledge, and "mere motion have given and granted, and by the presents do give and grant to the aforesaid "Thomas Cecyll and Philip Bolde" (several lands, messuages, etc., lately belonging to monasteries and chantries in various counties), "and all our Rectory and Church of Frytwell, and the advowson, "donation, presentation, free disposal and right of the patronage of the vicarage of the Church of "Frytwell, with all its incomings and belongings, in our County of Oxford, lately belonging to the "Royal College in the Academy of Oxford, lately called 'Kinge Henry the Eighth's Colledge,' "and all the houses, buildings, glebe lands, tithes of sheaves of corn and hay, and our other "commodities profits and hereditaments whatever with the appurtenances of the said Rectory, and "Church of Frytwell in whatever way belonging to them or when the same have been demised, "used, occupied, or placed now or lately in the tenure or occupation of Margaret Cottesforde "of Lawton widow, and William Cottesford her son, or their assigns or the assigns of either of "them," etc., etc.²

The Rectory tithes subsequently passed into many hands. At the enclosure of 1808 the Commissioners awarded to Mr. Willes, the then Impropiator, an allotment of land (251 a. 3 r. 21 p.) in lieu of them. The rental therefore on that land represented the value of the tithes at that time. Mr. Willes sold part of that land to Mr. Crook, a resident in Souldern, who built upon it the "Tower House." This, now known as Tower Farm, Cornhill Farm, or the Great Tithe Farm, measures 204 a. 1 r. 36 p., the gross estimated rental of it being £157, and the rateable value £141 5^s. Mrs. Crook, the widow of the purchaser, is now the lay rector, on whom lies the obligation of keeping the chancel of the Parish Church in repair.

¹ "For Cardinal Wolsey, July 1, 1525.

"Grant of the site of the suppressed Priory of St. Frideswide, "and the manors of — Pedyngton, and the rectories of —, "Fritwell, etc." (Calendar of State Papers, 17 Hen. VIII., part I.)

² Patent Roll, 6 Edw. VI., part 9, m. 25. The annual rent of all the rectories, messuages, tenements, meadows, pastures, etc., granted in this deed is stated to be £80 16s. 6d. The grant was made at Westminster on September 16, and signed with the King's private seal.

THE CHURCHWARDENS.

Every scrap of paper showing the inner working of parochial life in the generations that are past possesses an interest of its own, and the generations to come will be grateful for their preservation. Old parish books are especially interesting, because they serve to show the continuity of the church from early times to the present day; that in spite of all changes of manners and customs, in spite of ecclesiastical and political revolutions, whether the clergy were of one school of thought or another, the vestry met, and not for a single year did the parish go without its churchwardens, its sidesmen, its auditors, and its levies for the maintenance of public worship.

The early church accounts of this parish are contained in a small paper book with parchment cover :

The book for the towne, 1568.

Roberte Wells & Richarde Fox
maide theire accompt before
the parishe the xxxth of
May & all cost & charges
borne they have remanyng
in the townes stock jx^s.
Seven pound of lead & a quarterne.
A new green Carpet for y^e communion
table with frynge.

Roberte Welles
Richarde Ffoxe
Townes men a^o. 1572

Ffebruarij die quarto.

Detts owyng to the towne

Stocke a^o. 1572.

In primis Thomas Meyo	...	...	...	...	iiij ^s	j ^d
Rycharde Adams	...	...	...	...	viiij ^s	viiij ^d
Robert Welles	...	...	...	...	iiij ^s	
Heyo Welles	...	...	...	...	v ^s	
Richarde Ffoxe	...	...	...	...	iiij ^s	
Will Tanner	...	...	...	...	iiij ^s	
Roberte Hobcrofte	...	...	...	...	x ^s	
Edmonde Watts	...	...	...	...	x ^s	
John Rydley	...	...	...	...	xij ^s	
Willm tanner	...	...	...	...	viiij ^s	viiij ^d
Richard addames	...	...	...	...	iiij ^s	

xxv^{mo} Julii 1574.

Md. Edmonde Watts of the towne
stoke that he borrowed hathe repaid
of the same agayne iij^s iiij^d

Frytwell 1578/. Elizabth 20.
the daie of Aprill 7.

The Acount takin of the churche
wardenes before the parrisheners
beinge holly there present.

Thomas Wates John Pajat
the sum delyvered all charges
discharged remaynethe in
the churche boxe xix^s ij^d

It^m thomas Wates ovethe for the
towne mede and for want
of the wyntering of the towne
bolle xvj^s

It^m John Pajat resevethe the
holle summ in the churche box and
must delyver the said sum of xix^s ij^d

It^m made of the whitson alle
the sum of xxxvj^s

It^m reseved of thomas wats

It^m thomas wats oveth xvj^s

It^m pagat ovethe iiij^s

It^m thomas mail iij^s

this account made the
xxvj daie of Aprill

1579.

John Pagat & thomas wats
delyvered theyre accounts
the daie and yere above
said.

the 16. of Aprill 1579.

fritwell.

Churche wardenes.
Wyllyam Andrews his deputie
John Gibson Nicholas Weles.

Itm̄ reseed in the church

box the sum of ~~xxjs~~ vjd
xvj xv^s

1579 Elizabeth—21.
the towne Booke of dets

thomas Wats	...	...	...	...	xvjs
John					
richard Pagat	...	...	...	...	x ^s
thomas maie	...	...	...	...	iijs
the same maie for					
halefe a B of mault	...	...	...	...	vjs viij ^d
Robert Weles	...	...	...	...	iijs
Wylliam tanner	...	...	...	...	vij ^s v ^d
Richard addames	...	...	...	...	iijs
thomas weles	...	...	...	...	x ^s viij ^d
John ridle	...	...	...	...	xij ^s
John ridle	...	...	...	...	v ^s iiij ^d

1591.

Imp. that John wise gave for his mothers grave
in the church in the yeare of our lord 1591 the
som of iijs iiij^d

Itm̄ John Hobcrofte the yonger gave for his
daughters grave in the church in the yeare 1591
the some of iijs iiij^d

Itm̄ Wylliam Bower gave for his daughters
grauē in the church in the yeare 1591 the some
of iijs iiij^d

John Knight gave to mayneteyne the belles vj^d

The account of John Wisse for the
yeare 1641 beegining the 4th day of May.

Imprimis	payd to Thomas Harney for mending	} iiij ^d
	a bel weelle—	
Item	payd to William Androuse for makeing a seate in	} vjs
	the Church.	
Item	to my selfe for carrying to lode of stone	... .. ij ^s
Item	given to six Irish people	... .. vj ^d
Item	giuen to a breife	... .. js
Item	for bread and wine at Crismas	... .. iijs vj ^d
Item	fore four bel ropes	... .. vjs
Item	giuen to a breife	... .. vj ^d
Item	for bread and wine at Easter	... .. x ^s v ^d
Item	at the procession	... .. iijs

Item to the Smyth for his worke	...	...	...	vjs	ij ^d
Item spent at Kertleton at the visitation	...	...	...	j ^s	iiij ^d
				<hr/>	
				2 0 8	
				<hr/>	

Receaved of William Graye—2^s—v^d
 which maketh this accompt to want but
 1—19—8—more receaved of Robert Kilbie
 6^s—8^d which monye was given bye widdow
 Kilbie—soe in all theire owing to this
 accompt—1—12—7—

This account is aproved of bye the parishioners.

Widdow Kilbie gave to the Church of
 Ffrittwell—6^s—8^d which was deliverd
 to John Wisse

A NOTE OF THE CHURCH GOODS TAKEN
 THE 22 OF APRYLL 1593.

Imprimis a communion cuppe.
 Itm̄ a byble & a communion booke.
 Item Erasmus paraphrases.
 Item the 2 tomes of the homelys & the Iniunctions
 Itm̄ three other small prayer boockes
 Itm̄ a longe surplesse & on for the clark.
 Itm̄ a silke carpett for the table
 Itm̄ a communion table clothe that goodwife
 May kepeth & an old on that is in the church.
 Itm̄ iij longe old towells
 Itm̄ ij great large sheetes
 Itm̄ ij boxes on with locks and keys & on to kepe
 the communion cuppe in.
 Itm̄ a newe prayer booke that was bought 1594.
 Itm̄ three old defaced copes.
 Itm̄ on peweter ewer for wine.
 It. a greene Carpit for the communion table
 on great brasse panne.
 On latten bazen
 a pewter dishe to carry bred in
 a book of Jewell & Hardinge
 a bell.

Sold

a Cushen for the pulpyt
 all these things were delyvered
 to the Churchwardens 11 Apr. 1613.

1641

William Cilbie } Churchwardens Robert Kilbie
 & }
 John Collie } gaue to the Church ——— v^s.
 William Grace } Churchwardens, William Kilbie
 & }
 Nicholas Kilbie } gave to the Church—2^s—6^d.
 paid to William Grace.
 a pulpit cloth of green
 Mr. Samuel Sands
 his gift.

a green Cusshine for the pulpit
 with silk fringe & tassels of silk
 silk fringe for the communion table &
 silk fringe for the pulpit Cloth.

a pewter flaggine a pewter platte
 A silver chalice.

1653.

Given to y^e Church by Dani-
 el Rand y^e summe of—o^{li}—6^s 8^d
 This was delivered to Mathew Wise
 Due from Mr. Tho: Sanders (for
 breaking y^e Church ground to bury
 his wife) to y^e Chirch of Ffrittwell
 y^e summe of three shillings and four pennys.

The accounts of Robert Kilbie being
 Churchwarden ffor the yeare 1659
 together wth William Androuse.

			£	s.	d.
Impr. being warned to appeare	}		...	0	2 0
at Oxon upon busines concerning			...		
our Minister wee spent			...		
Item ffor butter and spice at the	}		...	0	4 6
procession			...		
Item paid for two rods for the bell wheels		...	...	0	4 9
Item paid ffor bread and wine ag st Christmas		...	...	0	4 1
Item paid for two bell ropes		...	...	0	3 2
Item ffor glazing the Church windows		...	...	0	1 10
Item given to the poore people that came with	}		...	0	1 0
a passe			...		
Item paid ffor bread and wine against Easter		...	...	0	12 4
			<hr/>		
			1 13 8		

Money Collected.				£	s.	d.
Impr. a leavy at 8 ^d the yard land	...	...	...	1	19	8
Item received of the old Churchwarden	...	...	...	0	7	1
Sum				2	6	9
Remaines due to the parishe	...	...	...	£0	13	1

Amounts similar to the last three exist for several years, until 1748, written on separate pieces of paper and presented at the Easter Vestry. Among them is another list of Church Goods written in 1722, which, compared with the account given in 1593, shows that little change had taken place in the Church furniture during that interval.

"These goods following belong to the Church of Fritwell, viz.:

- "A silver Cup given by Mrs. Barker.
- "2 Pewter Plates.
- "A Pewter Spout-Pot.
- "A Pewter Flagon.
- "A Brass Bason.
- "A Green Cushion, Carpet Cloth, and Pulpit Cloth fringed.
- "Jewel and Harding's Disputations. A Book of Homilies¹ (both these are in the possession of the Vicar).
- "A Bible and Common Prayer Book.
- "A Box to put the accounts in.
- "A Communion Table Cloth 2 yards & $\frac{1}{2}$.
- "A Hearse Cloth. Given by W^m Harvey.
- "A surplice.
- "A blue Bag to keep y^e Surplice in.
- "A processioning Cloth.
- "2 Damask Napkins, bought 1714.

"March 27, 1722. John Palmer, Vicar.

"Robert Colley }
"William Kelbye } Churchwardens."

"The Churchwardens Levey for the year 1746.

40 $\frac{3}{4}$ yard land at 2^s 10^d p yard-land, and 21 yard land at 2^s 6^d

	£	s.	d.
Sr Baldan Wake 2 y ^d land	...	0	5 0
Will ^m Kilby	...	0	13 5
Rich ^d Hiccock	...	0	15 11 $\frac{1}{2}$
Jn ^o Colley	...	0	13 7
Edm ^d Collingridge	...	1	1 0

¹ "This book belongs to the Church of Fritwell, Oxfordshire.
"--W. Vaughan, Vicar" (entry in the book).
"This book, having been lost or disposed of, was restored to

"the Church of Fritwell by the Rev. Edward Gordon, Curate,
"Oct., A.D. 1857.

"Richard Greaves }
"W. Forsyth Grant } Churchwardens."

							£	s.	d.
Rob ^t Colley...	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	9	11
Cris ^t Rand	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	14	2
James Mandes	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	17	1
Will ^m Hopcroft	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	2	10
Tho ^s Abraham	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	17	10
Jn ^o Eldridge	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	8	6
Benjamin Hopcroft	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	11	4
James French	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	8½
Natha ^l Harris	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	8½
Edm ^d Endoll	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	8½
Widdow George	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	5
Will ^m Hemmins	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	5
Widdow Ward	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	5
Will ^m Grace	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	4½
Giles Ibil	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	5
Edw ^d Tanner	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	8½
Will ^m Wells	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	0½
Henry Wise	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	2	10
							8	3	3½

Thirdings :

Will ^m Kilby	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	10½
Rich ^d Hiccock	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	1	10½
Jn ^o Colley	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	11½
Christ ^t Rand	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	4½
Edw ^d Tanner	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	3
Joseph Jarvice	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	3
Nath ^l Harriss	...	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	1
							0	5	8
							8	3	3
							8	8	11"

The lowest sum in these accounts spent in Church expenses was £1 2s. 6d. in 1642, and the highest £22 12s. 1d. in 1694, the mean being about £5 or £6 yearly. Small sums were spent in repairs of the fabric, the bell wheels, and bell ropes, the clock, the churchyard fences, the washing of the surplice twice, 8d. From 1641 to 1692 there are entries, "For Bread and Wine at Christ-mas, 6s 2d," "For Bread and Wine at Easter 13s 6d," these being the only celebrations at that time. The Churchwardens regularly attended the two visitations of the Archdeacon of Oxford, the first at Bicester or Oxford in May or June, the second at Islip in October, charging for their expenses at each 6s. 8d., and paying the apparitor's "wages," 2s. Until the end of the XVIIth century the Church rate was imposed to defray expenses connected with the Church, but at that time the practice began here as elsewhere of paying out of that rate whatever could not be paid for in any

other way. Thus when, in 1662, Charles II. imposed a tax, known as the "Hearth Tax," on every fire-place or hearth in England, the entry, "p^d for smoak fardings 3^s 8^d," occurs first in 1674, and is continued for several years afterwards. The usual entries abound, as to the destruction of animals supposed to be hurtful, of which the first occurs in 1678, "p^d Job East for killing hedge-hogs, "1^s 8^d." "To Hugh Gacy, for killing hedge-hogs, 1^s." Sparrow killing was first paid for in 1724, at the rate of 2d. per dozen. This village, lying between the towns of Banbury and Bicester was continually taxed to relieve vagrants and travellers holding "passes" and "letters of request." There are constant charges of 1s. or 6d. for "cleaning the Church Lane," which in 1718 is explained to be "cutting down nettles and briars in Church Lane."

The custom prevailed for many years for the chief householders of the parish to take the office of churchwarden in turn, but this was changed in 1713. In that year Mr. Palmer wrote in the Church Register:

"On Easter Tuesday, April the 7th, 1713, I broke the custom of electing Churchwardens "according to houses, and chose Robert Hobcroft out of his turn, the parishioners pleading "custom, that I ought to be confined to their method."

The records of the Archdeacon of Oxford's Court give the following list of the Churchwardens:

1729. Giles Ibell.

He disobeyed the summons to attend the Archdeacon's Court, and was consequently declared to be (1) contumacious and (2) excommunicated.

"In the name of GOD, Amen. Since the Venerable John Inch, L.D., Official Principal "of the Archdeacon of the Archdeaconry of Oxford, lawfully appointed, of his office rightly and "lawfully proceeding, has decreed that one, Giles Ibell, Warden of the parish Church of Fritwell, "in the County and Archdeaconry of Oxford, on account of his manifest contumacy in not "appearing before us on a day, hours, and place on this part appointed, and now past, to answer "to certain articles, enquiries, or questions concerning the health of his own soul, and the "reformation of morals and offences of his (people), having been at another time rightly and "lawfully cited, having been twice summoned, and long and sufficiently waited for, and he in no "way appeared, is contumacious, and in punishment of his contumacy of this kind, is excom- "municated, Therefore I, Baynton Parsons, M.A., Priest, by sufficient authority in this part, "declare the same Giles Ibell to be excommunicated in these letters read by me.

"Read by me the 15th day of January, A.D. 1729.

"B. PARSONS, PRESBYTER."¹

1730.	James Mand.	Robert Hobcroft.
—33.	William Kilby.	
—35.	Thomas Heatley.	John Colley.
—37.	James Mand.	Robert Hopcraft.
—40.	(Same.)	William Hopcraft.
—41.	Christopher Rand.	Robert Colley.
—43.	John Colley.	William Kilby.
—45.	Thomas Abraham.	James French.
—47.	Benjamin Hopcraft.	William Eldridge.

¹ Book of Excommunications, in Bodleian Library; MSS. from the Archdeacon's Court.

- | | | |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| —49. | William Hemings. | |
| —51. | John Colley. | James Mandds. |
| —53. | Christopher Rand. | Robert Colley. |
| —55. | Thomas Abraham. | Benjamin Hopcraft. |
| —57. | John Colley. | James French. |
| —58. | (Same.) | Richard French. |
| —59. | Thomas Philipps. | William Hemings. |
| —61. | William Kilby. | Daniel Rand. |
| —63. | James Mand. | Robert Colley. |
| —65. | Thomas Abraham. | Benjamin Hopcraft. |
| —67. | (Same.) | John Colley. |
| (They present Jemima Taylor for a bastard child.) | | |
| —69. | Robert Johnson. | James Mand. |
| —73. | John Colley. | John Abraham. |
| —75. | John Eldridge. | John Preedy. |
| —77. | Robert Johnson. | James Mand. |
| —79. | Richard Drope Gough. | William Kilby. |
| —81. | Henry Borton. | John Colley. |
| —83. | (Same.) | Robert Johnson. |
| ("The church-way wants reparation.") | | |
| —85. | (Same.) | John Eldridge. |
| —87. | Samuel Badger. | Richard Kilby. |
| —89. | Henry Borton. | Thomas Kilby. |
| —91. | John Johnson. | (Same.) |
| —93. | Robert Johnson. | Richard Kilby. |
| —95. | Henry Borton. | (Same.) |
| —97. | (Same.) | |
| "1800. June 2. Our Church is in good repaire, except 'bit of plastring.' Admonished to
"finish the plastering of their Church by the 1 st of October next. Oct. 1 st 'the plastring don.'" | | |
| 1805. | (Same.) | John Johnson. |
| —06. | (Same.) | Robert Johnson. |
| "1808. The Church out of repair. A putting in repair." | | |
| —09. | Richard Kilby. | Thomas Kilby. |
| "June 6. Repard since last visitation. | | |
| "Another part wants repairing. Some of the lead to be recast. | | |
| "Oct. The Church porch under repair. It shall be finished in two months. | | |
| "1810. May 23. Church porch is repayrd." | | |
| —11. | (Same.) | Thomas Abraham. |
| —12. | John East. | Richard Rogers. |
| —19. | James East. | (Same.) |
| —21. | (Same.) | John Stuchbury. |
| —23. | (Same.) | George Wells. |
| "1827. The outside of the Tower, and walls of the Church, want pointing, which they
"are about to do directly." | | |

" 1832. All well except as referred to in the certificate of repairs."

—33. (Same.) Henry Borton.

" 1833. June. The Bell in the Church is not repaired.

" —. Oct. The Bell not repaired."

1834. (Same.) (Same.)

—38. Jeremiah Kirby. (Same.)

—42. Allen Jones. (Same.)

—49-52. (Same.) Richard Greaves.

—53. (Same.) D'Avey Hyde.

—54-55. (No names appear in the Churchwarden's account book.)

—56. Richard Greaves.

—57-61. (No names appear.)

—62-63. Richard Greaves. Matthew Kilbey.

—64-65. (Same.) George Bishop.

—66-70. (Same.) Matthew Kilbey.

—71-72. (Same.) Robert Kilbey.

—73. (Same.) John Thomas Malings.

—74-75. (Same.) Matthew Kilbey.

—76-78. William R. Thornton. (Same.)

—79-80. James Maisey. Joseph White.

—81-83. (Same.) Henry Scott.

—84-85. Thomas H. Walford. John Cherry.

(Refused to act.)

—86-88. (Same.) Col. Williamson.

—89. Albert Williams. Henry Scott.

(Neither admitted to office.)

—90. (No Churchwarden appointed.)

—91. Henry Scott.

(Not admitted to office.)

—92. James Maisey.

(Not admitted to office.)

HISTORY
OF
S O U L D E R N .

COMPILED BY
J. C. BLOMFIELD, M.A.,
Rector of Launton and Rural Dean.

" There in others' looks discover
What thy own life's course has been,
And thy deeds of years past over
In thy fellow-men be seen."

TRANSLATION OF GOETHE BY T. CARLYLE.

LONDON:
ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.
1893.

SUL-THORN, SULDREN, SOULDERN.

“COULD the body of the whole Earth be submitted to the examination of our senses, were it
“not too big and disproportioned for our enquiries, too unwieldy for the management of
“the eye and hand, there is no question but it would appear to us as curious and well-contrived
“a frame as that of a human body. We should see the same concatenation and subserviency, the
“same necessity and usefulness, the same beauty and harmony in all and every of its parts, as
“what we discover in the body of every single animal.¹ It is no small proof of design in the
“arrangement of the materials, which compose the surface of our earth, that whereas the primitive
“and granitic rocks are least calculated to afford a fertile soil, they are for the most part made
“to constitute the mountain districts of the world, while the lower and more temperate regions are
“usually composed of derivative or secondary strata, in which the compound nature of their
“ingredients qualifies them to be of the greatest utility to mankind by their subserviency to the
“purposes of luxuriant vegetation. The three principal materials of all strata are the earths of
“flint, clay, and lime; each of these taken singly, and in a state of purity, is comparatively barren;
“the admixture of a small proportion of clay gives tenacity and fertility to sand, and the further,
“addition of calcareous earth produces a soil highly valuable to the agriculturist. Hence it
“happens that the great corn-fields, and the greater population of the world are placed on strata
“of the secondary and tertiary formations, or on their detritus, composing still more compound,
“and consequently more fertile, diluvial and alluvial deposits. Hence also it appears that the
“numerical amount of our population, their varied occupations, and the fundamental sources of
“their industry and wealth depend, in a great degree, upon the geological character of the strata
“on which they live. Their physical condition also, as indicated by the duration of life and health,
“depending on the more or less salubrious nature of their employments; and their moral condition,
“as far as it is connected with these employments, are directly affected by the geological causes, in
“which these various occupations originate.² Thus if landing at the extremity of England we
“traverse Cornwall and the North of Devonshire, and crossing to St. David’s make the tour of all
“North Wales, and, passing thence through Cumberland to the South-west shore of Scotland,
“proceed hither through the hilly region of the Border counties, or along the Grampians to the
“German Ocean, we find a thinly-peopled region of barren mountains. If, starting from the
“Coast of Devon, we cross the Midland Counties from the mouth of the Exe to that of the Tyne
“we find a continued succession of fertile hills and valleys, crowded with a flourishing population of
“manufacturers and agriculturists. If again we travel from the coast of Dorset to that of York-
“shire, over elevated plains of oolitic limestone or of chalk, without a single mountain or mine or
“coal-pit or any important manufactory, we find a great cornfield, occupied almost exclusively by
“persons engaged in the pursuits of husbandry.”

¹ Spectator, No. 543.

² Geology, by Dr. Buckland, vol. I., chap. VIII. Bridgewater Treatises.

PREHISTORIC TIMES.

The surface-soil of the spot now forming the parish of Souldern is a group of limestones, marls, and clays, forming the lower beds of the Great Oolite. Below this, at the slope of the eastern end of the village the ferruginous, sandy beds of the Inferior Oolite crop out.¹ These surround the village in the form of a ring a quarter of a mile wide. Outside these, and on still lower ground, the clays of the Upper Lias make an outer broken ring of about the same width, open to the east; one limb turning south towards Ploughley Hill. Above, east of the main road, the lower beds of the Great Oolite again come in and are well shown in the old quarries near, where a good section of the flags and shells may be seen.²

The stone is strongly jointed and dips 4° to south-east. On the north side of the road leading to the Tower Farm, just within the allotment ground, a quarry, now apparently disused, shows the same beds dipping strongly to the north. A third of a mile to the north-east there is another quarry with higher beds, showing the commencement of a roll, which once carried the continuation of these beds further. The white limestones have been largely quarried about here for building purposes, and road stone, and are still used for these purposes. The country between Souldern and Aynhoe is much broken by faults, and the beds are shaken about and tilted. Two cross Anyhoe park from north-east to south-west, the more southerly one coinciding with the county boundary; another runs from "Inland's Farm," skirts the village on the north-east and is lost in the last-mentioned fault. They complicate the surface geology, though the displacements are not very considerable.

The following fossils were collected from the Great Oolite beds a few years ago:

Chemnitzia Lonsdalei, M. & L.
 Ostrea cistata, Sow.
 Ostrea Sowerbyi, M. & L.
 Pecten vagans, Sow.
 ——— sp.
 Modiola imbricata, Sow.
 ——— Lonsdalei, M. & L.
 Macrodon Husoriensis, D'Arch.
 Pteroperua costatula, Disl.
 Cardium Stricklandi, M. & L.
 Unicardium variosum.
 Trigonina denticulata.
 Lucina crassa.
 Cypicardia Barthonica.
 ——— Islipensis.
 Ceronyx Bajociana, D. orb.
 ——— undulata, M. & L.
 Homomya ventricosa, Ag.
 Myacites decurtatus, Goldf.
 ——— securiformis, M. & L.
 ——— unioniformis, M. & L.

¹ This formation covers a belt of country of an average width of four miles, reaching from Whichwood to Whittlebury Forest.

² Geological Survey of Great Britain (A. H. Green, 1864).

Pholadomya Heraulti, Ag.
 Rhynchonella concinna, Sow.
 Stomatopora antiqua, T. & R.
 Clypeus.
 ———— Mülleri.
 Echinobrissus clunicularis, Lloyd.
 ————— Woodwardi, Wr.
 (Alga).

Many others might have been found.¹

The first disturbance of this surface soil took place in those distant ages, when the aboriginal inhabitants of this country dug here and there a grave wherein to bury their dead. A skeleton supposed to be British from its position (the knees being gathered up towards the breast), and enclosed in a cistvaen, composed of four stone slabs, placed at right angles, was found some years ago by some workmen in levelling the ground on the line of the Portway in Aynhoe Park.²

A second and far greater disturbance was made, when the Romans, during their occupation of this country, carried across this district two roads. One of these was the great road from and to the North, between York and Southampton, called therefore The Portway or Town way.³ The line of this road may be still distinctly traced from Walton Grounds through Aynhoe Park to the east of Souldern village, and thence over the high land between Fritwell and Somerton, above the two Heyford villages to Kirtlington. The other was a branch road leading from the Portway through Tusmore and Stoke to join the Akeman Street near the station at Alchester.⁴

Mr. Beesley in his History of Banbury mentions a trackway, which is supposed to have come from Droitwich, and is called "The Saltway." This Saltway plainly exists from Northampton by Crouch Hill to Bodicote near Banbury. There it disappears, but can be traced with more or less certainty to Nell Bridge over the Cherwell. Thence it is supposed to have passed to or near Souldern. It may have there joined the Portway or if, as is possible, it was of earlier formation than the Roman road, it may have run in the same direction, and subsequently been lost in it.

Traces of Roman habitation in the neighbourhood of these roads have been found in considerable numbers. Two tumuli (afterwards named Ploughley Hill and Round Hill) marked the burial-places of two chief Roman inhabitants. About seventy years ago in the carpenter's yard at the western end of Souldern village some Roman coins and a bead necklace were dug up; and more recently, on a farm belonging to the late Mr. R. Crook, the following coins were found:—Carausius, A.D. 289-293; Valens (son of Gratian), A.D. 364-378; Claudius Gothicus, A.D. 268-270 (probably Emperor after Gallienus); Tetricus, A.D. 267-272 (a Roman senator, saluted Emperor in the reign of Aurelius). There has also been found in the parish a bronze coin of the second size of the Emperor Probus.⁵ Some tesserae, and a small bronze figure, evidently a household god, were also found in the same place, and it is probable that if further excavations were made on this spot, other interesting relics would be discovered. The following account of sepulchral remains have been recorded by Sir H. Dryden, Bart., who has interested himself much in the antiquities of this district.

¹ Taken from Mr. Gough's Historical and Descriptive Notices of the Parish of Souldern, published by the Oxfordshire Archaeological Society, 1887.

² Baker's History of Northamptonshire.

³ See Early History of this Deanery, p. 7.

⁴ Early History of this Deanery, p. 12. See map, pp. 20-1.

⁵ Gough's Descriptive Notices.

"In January, 1844, having heard that remains had recently been discovered at Souldern, I
 "visited the spot, which is on the west side of the narrow road leading out of the main street of
 "Souldern down hill southwards. The ground falls from the garden on all sides but the west. A
 "skeleton and urn were discovered by workmen who were digging stone, from whose information
 "and a compass I made out their relative positions. The soil was about two feet thick on a deep
 "rock of limestone. The skeleton, of man's stature, judging by the teeth, about thirty or thirty-four
 "years of age, stretched out at full length on its back west by south and east by north, head to the
 "former, rock hollowed out to receive it, the bones being three feet under the surface. On the right
 "hand side of its head lay a pair of bone ornaments two inches long, in shape four-sided cones, having
 "on each side nine small engraved circles. At the small end of each is inserted an iron rivet,
 "which is probably the remains of a hook, for suspension perhaps from the ear by another brass
 "ring. About the head were many fragments of thin brass, which, when collected and put
 "together, form parts of two bands, the first of which is seven inches long and three-fourths
 "wide, and has encircled the lower part of a leathern skull cap. The cope of the leather and this
 "brass band were held together by a thin concave brass binding, in the hollow of which fragments
 "of leather are still to be seen. On each side of the helmet attached to the brass band was an
 "ornamental hinge for a chin-strap. Of the other band about one foot five inches are existing, the
 "whole of which is of equal width, and one-eighth narrower than the first. It was probably the
 "binding of the edge of the helmet where there would be a seam, or intended to encircle the
 "helmet close above the other binding. On both these bands are rivets which show that the
 "leather riveted was three-sixteenths thick. Nothing else, according to my informant, was found
 "with the skeleton. About seven feet north of its head was found an urn containing bones, about
 "the same depth under the surface as the skeleton. The urn was in fragments when discovered,
 "but has since been restored. It is of rather coarse black pottery, averaging about three-sixteenths
 "of an inch in thickness, and imperfect in the lip. What remains is seven and three-quarters
 "inches high, and eight and three-quarters inches in diameter. It is ornamented on the upper part
 "by two horizontal bands of dancetted pattern. At about two-thirds up the sides are four roundish
 "projections at equal distances from each other, and between them semicircular bands of orna-
 "ment. About five feet east by south from the urn, and eleven feet from the head of the skeleton,
 "they found a number of bones in a heap, which they thought had been moved before. These were
 "probably the remainder of a body or bodies, of which parts were enclosed in one or all the three
 "urns. The workmen soon stopped digging, but some months afterwards began again to get stone
 "in the same garden, and found, about two and a half feet below the surface, two more urns. The
 "first contained fragments of bones. It is five and a half inches high, and eight and a half inches
 "in the widest diameter; composed of light gray pottery, and very thin, and great part being
 "only one-eighth of an inch thick. The ornamental work on it is very slight, of which the chief
 "part is dancetted pattern, each triangle being filled with from nine to thirteen small circular
 "indentations. The other urn was imperfect in the upper part, and probably was fractured when
 "interred, for it contained the skull of an infant a few days old, which was too large to have been
 "admitted through the mouth of the urn. Many sepulchral urns have been discovered, evidently
 "fractured before interment, containing bones too large to have passed through the mouth, and
 "occasionally the vessels have been joined together again, after the insertion of the bones. This
 "urn is five and a half inches high (the lip being lost) and six and a half inches in its widest
 "diameter. It is of black pottery, and about a quarter of an inch thick, and destitute of ornament.

"None of the urns were protected by stones or tiles from the pressure of the earth. About twenty. five feet west by north of this skeleton was found another skeleton several years ago; and about 1840 'some things' were found about thirty or forty feet north-east of the skeleton. I was unable to learn any further particulars of those discoveries. The skeletons discovered north of Aynho village lay north and south but we are not informed to which point the heads were laid. Most of the skeletons found in these parts, accompanied with pottery of this class, have had the heads between south and west. From the pottery found at Souldern I am inclined to attribute these remains to the Romanized Britons of the fifth or sixth century, but in the opinion of some antiquaries they belong to the Saxons of the eighth century. The three urns, brass straps and one of the two bone ornaments, are now in my possession, having been given to me by the Rev. Dr. Stephenson and others."

Thus the soil of this district, as of the greater part of England, contains a great museum of geological specimens, and a series of historical strata, which are among the most interesting of human records. The readers of Hugh Miller remember what a variety of fossils he found in the stratified rocks of his little island, and the museums are full of such objects. Again, when we search for underground historical relics, stratum after stratum carries the explorer through the ages of successive invaders, and after passing through the characteristic remains of Anglo-Saxon habitation, he comes upon a Roman pavement, and below this the weapons and ornaments of a tribe of ancient Britons. One cannot strike a spade into the earth in Great Britain without a fair chance of some surprise in the form of a Saxon coin, or a Celtic implement, or a Roman fibula. So much of the soil has been trodden by human feet, built on in the form of human habitations, nay, has been itself a part of preceding generations of human beings, that it is in a kind of dumb sympathy with those who tread its turf. Perhaps it is not literally true that

"One half her soil has walked the rest
"In poets, heroes, martyrs, sages,"

but so many of all these lie within it that the whole island is a *campo santo* to all who can claim the same blood as that which runs in the veins of her unweaned children.¹

As the English settlers in the south of this district extended the bounds of their occupation, and pierced the great wilderness which lay northwards, probably as late as the VIIIth century, they found a broad expanse of land covered with thorn-bushes. The growth of the common thorn implies an open, airy situation (for this shrub will not grow under the drip or the shade of trees), and a free deep loam soil, neither too elevated and hot, nor very dry and poor. In situations and soil suited to its growth, the hawthorn flourishes and attains considerable size. It necessarily arrests attention. Its bark defended by sharp stipules; its branches covered every May with clusters of snow-white blossoms, a thing of beauty amid the darker foliage around; its berries red in autumn, affording food for birds and cattle, mark it out from other indigenous plants.

"Two sensations I had," says a writer of the present day,² "in Windsor Park or Forest. The first was the lovely sight of the *hawthorn* in full bloom. I had always thought of the hawthorn as a pretty shrub growing in hedges, as big as a currant-bush or a barberry-bush, or some humble plant of that character. I was surprised to see it as a tree standing by itself, and

¹ "One Hundred Days in Europe," by Oliver Wendell Holmes, 1887. He is comparing the poverty of a new country like America with the wealth of Old England in these products of the soil. "A top dressing of antiquity is all he can look for in a New

"England field. The soil is not humanized enough to be interested."

² Mr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, *ibid.*

"making the most delicious roof a pair of young lovers could imagine to sit under. It looked at a little distance like a young apple-tree covered with new-fallen snow. I shall never see the word hawthorn in poetry again without the image of the snowy but far from chilling canopy rising before me."

It is, therefore, not surprising that those spots in this country where hawthorn-bushes grow, either singly or in numbers, were noted by the early English settlers. Names derived from them are very frequent in the Saxon charters. The site of Westminster Abbey was called "Thorney Island," and in the narrow limits of this district we find *Highthorn* on the line of the Portway, *Blackthorn* on the line of the Akeman Street, *Thorndon* in the parish of Goddington, and the spot whose history is here to be attempted.

But besides the common hawthorn there exists in many parts of England another kind of thorn (named in Loudon's "Arboretum Britannicum" "*Cratægus oxycanthus precox*") which blossoms twice in the year, putting forth buds and green shoots, about the size of a sixpence, at Christmas, or sooner if the weather is severe, and then a few hours afterwards assuming its normal condition and breaking forth with renewed vigour in the spring. Such a thorn-bush of considerable size and age stands in a hedgerow in an exposed position in a distant part of the parish of Woodham Ferrers, in Essex. Another is to be seen in the village of Shenley, near Stony Stratford, in Bucks (partly railed off by some old palisading); also in a garden at Thames Ditton; at Warbstow, in Cornwall; at Crupton, near Frome; Vanchurch, in Dorsetshire; on the Skerid Mountain in Monmouthshire; in the neighbourhood of Ledbury, Herefordshire; at Evercreech, near Bath, and three in the Victoria Park in that city. There are several such thorns in the neighbourhood of Glastonbury, which claim to be grafts from the famous thorn which once grew within the precincts of Glastonbury Abbey,¹ and was said to have been planted by St. Joseph of Arimathea. It is an old custom, still maintained in the places mentioned, for many of the villagers and others to visit these trees at midnight on Christmas Eve, or the eve of the Epiphany, to witness the budding into leaf which certainly then takes place.²

There was some peculiarity in a thorn-tree growing on or near the spot where the village of Souldern now stands, which caused it to be distinguished as "*Sul-thorn*." This word is evidently of Saxon origin. The prefix "*Sul*" may have two meanings. It may be either a noun meaning a plough or ploughed land,³ or an adjective, like "*Sel*," meaning great.⁴ Thus the compound name Sulthorn may mean either ploughed land among thorns, thorny ground turned into arable, or a thorn-bush remarkable for its size or some other peculiarity attaching to it.

AFTER THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

When King William partitioned to his favourites the land he had conquered, he gave the village which had been formed near the Sulthorn to *Jordan de Sai*, al^s *Say*.

His name appears on the Roll of Battle Abbey, and he must have stood pre-eminently high in royal favour, for with the grant of this estate the Conqueror gave also special privileges of free-

¹ Several letters on the "Holy Thorn" appeared in the *Standard* newspaper of January, 1893, from which these particulars are taken.

² In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for January, 1753, the following curious paragraph appears: "Glastonbury.—A vast concourse of people attended the noted thorn on Christmas Day, new style; but, to their great disappointment, there was no appearance of

"its blowing, which made them watch it narrowly the 5th of January, the Christmas Day, old style, when it blowed."

³ There is an A.-S. word "*Sul-nicle*," which means a small portion of plough-land ("*nicle*" meaning a little piece of anything. *Sulcus* is the Latin name for a furrow, and *suleare* to plough or furrow.

⁴ *Sel* meaning great, is found in *Selwood*, the great forest.

warren, of frankpledge, of the property of all waifs and strays, and of exemption from all services and dues payable to the Crown. Thus privileged, this estate had no account to render to the royal Commissioners of 1066, and is therefore not mentioned in the Domesday Survey.

The descendants of Jordan de Sai became lords of the barony of Richard's Castle in Herefordshire.¹ *Osborn Fitz-Hugh*, in the VIIth year of Henry II.'s reign, paid £20 for the scutage of those knights' fees whereof he was possessed, the seat and head of the barony being at Richard's Castle. He was succeeded by his brother, *Hugh de Say*, who assumed that surname from his mother, Eustachia de Say. *Hugh* died in the wars of Wales, and by his wife, Lucy Clifford, left issue two sons, *Richard*, who died s.p., and *Hugh*, who was lord of Richard's Castle after the death of his brother. He had by Matilda, his wife, two sons, *Elias* and *Robert*, both of whom died without issue, and one only daughter named *Margaret*. This *Margaret*, in the early part of the reign of King John, was married to *Hugh de Ferrers*, and the Sheriff of Hereford received that King's command to cause scutage to be paid to her by all her knights and tenants within his bailiwick. In the XVIIth year of that reign she was wife of *Robert de Mortimer*,² to whom the Sheriff of Sussex was commanded to give possession of the lands in Berwick which had belonged to Matilda de Say, mother of the said *Margaret*, his wife. In the IVth year of Henry III.'s reign she contracted a third marriage, with *William de Stutevill*, who paid a fine of two palfreys to the King to have her for his wife, with all the lands of her inheritance. She appears to have had issue only by Mortimer, who will be found under the title of *Mortimer of Richard's Castle*. Thus the families of Say and Mortimer became successively through three centuries the feudal lords of this manor.

The early possessors of this manor under these feudal lords were members of the family of *Arderne*, a family of high position resident at Wickham, within the parish of Banbury.

“Escheats of the lord the King in Oxfordshire.

“These are tenants of alms-gifts in the County of Oxford.

“Solphorn. *Lucia de Arderne* holds the whole village as her free marriage portion; it cannot “be ascertained by how large a fee, nor does she at any time owe scutage, as they say.”

In 1236 she acknowledged the right of the Abbey of Eynsham to hold the advowson of the Parish Church. She was succeeded by

Ralph de Arderne.

“*Sulthorn*’. Lord *Ralph de Ardirne* holds the manor of Sulthorn’ of the Honour of *Richard's Castle*, which *William de Stotewile* holds by the service of half a knight's fee, he has liberty, “but we do not know by what warrant, except that the Sheriff receives iiij^s of the view.

“Of the other articles of enquiry they know nothing, save of the lord *Ralph's* default.”³

The next possessor⁴ was *Thomas de Arderne*, whose under-tenant in occupation of the manor was Thomas of Lewknor, who had married Lucia de Arderne, the grand-daughter of the former possessor of that name.

¹ Dugdale's Baronage, p. 453, and Additions in Collectanea Biographica et Genealogica, vol. V.

² Robert de Mortimer was the son or brother of Hugh de Mortimer of Wigmore, the first of that name. In 12 Hen. II. he became by his marriage possessed of Richard's Castle, and the twenty-three knights' fees which belonged to that honor,

³ Hundred Rolls of Henry III., 1254-5.

⁴ Kennett says that Philip Basset, Baron of Wycombe (1258-71), sold this manor for forty marks of silver to Ralph de Bray. But there seems some confusion here.

“ Hundred Rolls of Edw. I.

“ *Thomas de Leuekenore* holds the manor of *Sulthurne* of *Thomas de Arderne* by the service of “ 1 lb. of cummin yearly, and the same *Thomas* holds of the heirs of *Say*, and it is a free manor in “ itself, and has the view of frankpledge from the first Conquest of England, and the king’s Bailiffs “ have no right of entry except by a brief of the lord the king. And he has ancient warren from “ the first conquest of England. And the Sheriff of Oxfordshire has *iiij^s* yearly from the time of “ *John de Tywe*,¹ formerly Sheriff of Oxfordshire, who unlawfully levied these *iiij^s*. And he has wayf “ from the aforesaid Conquest. And he holds in demesne *ij* carucates of land with the meadow “ and pasture adjoining. And he has there one free fishery from the first head of his meadow of “ *Goldenham* to the meadow of *Fretewelle*. And the same lord of *Sulthurne*, if he pleases, or his “ attorney, shall come to the two great Hundred Courts of *Ploughley* to demand his liberty for his “ dependants belonging to the manor of *Sulthurne*, and by this they shall be quit, and can return “ without any fine and loss, and that liberty has been used from the aforesaid conquest.”

The names of his dependants, their social position, and the nature of their tenures are then described. They were all engaged in agriculture, seven holding freeholds, and twenty-four holding land by servile tenure.

Freemen.

“ *Ralph de Arderne* holds of the same *Thomas* *ij* virgates of land by 1 penny yearly for all services.

“ *Thomas Silvestre* holds of the same *ij* virgates of land and one water mill by *xlviij^s* “ yearly and two comings to the King’s Hundred of *Ploughley* and suit of his lord’s court for “ three weeks.

“ *Adam de Ov’ton* holds of the same *ij½* virgates of land by *iiij^s* yearly, and he will do in all “ things as the aforesaid *Thomas*.

“ *Richard Brun* holds of the same *j* virgate of land by *ij^s* and suit as above.

“ *Alan Falke* holds, etc.; *Hugh de Wilton* holds, etc.

“ *The Prior of Bannebury* holds of the same *j* virgate of land in pure and perpetual alms.

“ *Villeins.*

“ *Alice ate Streme* holds of the same *j* virgate of land in villeinage by *xix^d* yearly. She will “ work, pay tallage, and redeem her sons at the lord’s will.

“ *William Thomas* holds of the same *j* virgate of land in the same way.

“ *Robert Sibils* holds, etc.; *Ralph Richard*, etc.; *Agnes Durant*, etc. (2 separate virgates); “ *John Durant*, etc.; *John Osborn*, etc.; *Isabella Kniht*, etc.; *Alan Hamund*, etc.

“ *Ralph Lollay* holds of the same half a virgate of land by *ix½^d*; he will work, pay tallage, and “ redeem his sons at the lord’s will.

“ *John Attewelle* holds of the same a tenement in the same way.

“ *William Aylmar*, etc.; *John le Carter*, etc.; *Isabella Osborn*, etc.; *Henry Sibils*, etc.; “ *Richard of the Mill*, etc.; *William Howeline*, etc.; *Richard Nel*, etc.; *Osbert Edine*, etc.; *John “ Thomas’ son*, etc.; *Widow Simon’s son*, etc.; *Thomas Philip’s son*, *Nel*, *Edine’s son*, etc.; *Simon “ Boveton*, etc.”

A few years later this estate passed to *John de Luwetote*, who is mentioned in the Charter

¹ High Sheriff in the second half of 1236, in 1237, and in the first half of 1238.

Rolls of 1281 (9 Edw. I.) as having also some property in Hertfordshire, and at the Inquisition after his death in 1294, as holding, with many other manors, "Solthorne maner' Oxon."

The next in occupation was *Thomas de Abbresbury*, al^s *Abberbury*. He was a large landholder, holding the neighbouring manor of Steeple Aston, and several estates in Oxfordshire and Berkshire. In 1292 he obtained a grant of free warren in two of them.¹ At the Inquisition after his death in 1305 his estate at Souldern is accurately described :

" Master *Thomas de Abbresbury*, deceased.¹

" Writ dated 8 May 35 Edw. I.

" [Inquisition taken at] June 35 Edw. I.

" He died seized in his demesne as of fee of the Manor of *Sulthorn*, which he held of the heir of *John de Luwetot*. There is there one capital messuage worth yearly 4^s. 240^a arable land, 4^l, price of the acre 4^d. 16^a meadow 32^s, price of the acre 2^s. A several pasture, 2^s; another several pasture, 2^s; & a common pasture for sheep, 2^s.

" Total, 6^l 2^s.

" And there are there 104^s 1^d of the rent of free tenants, named *Ranulph de Ardene*, *John Gerard*, *William de Overton*, *Richard Broun*, *Julian Jেকে*, *John Consel*, *Geoffrey atte Streme*, and *Stephen le Mouner*, who holds certain messuages and lands and pay certain rents (specified); and each of them do Bedripp. in Autūpū at the lord's bidding, and it is worth j^d.

" Total, 104^s 1^d. Total of the works 8^d.

" And there are there of the rents of villans, named *Henry atte Streme*, *Thomas de Fonte*, *William Dalmer*, *John Carter*, *Thomas Bele*, *Thomas Tymmes*, *William Thoñs*, *Alice la Vedue*, *Alan Hamond*, *Isabella relict of — le Knyght*, *Ralph Osebern*, *John Duraunt*, *Agnes Duraunt*, *Richard Hamond*, *Ralph Prat*, *Ralph Lullay*, *Geoffrey Hamond*, *Thomas le Bay*, *Nigillatte Grene*, *Jordan Boneton*, *Alice 'Neel*, *Agnes Hughelyne*, *Jordan de Molyn*, *Henry Sibille* (?).

" Total, 4^l 5^s.

" Total value of their works, 22^s 2^d."

(These works consist of ploughing, harrowing, etc.)

" And there are there 24^s of cottars' rents, named *Lucy Karters*, *Roger Godefray*, *Sarra Siklite* (?), *Alice Jেকে*, *William le Bercher*, *William de Stratton*, *Alice Elde*, *Margery Neel*, *William de Benham*, *Matilda Bonett* . . (?), *Roger le Waleys*, *Richard de la Lee*, *John de London*, *Alan Prat*, *William Turk*, *Matilda Geffray*.

" Total, 24^s.

" Total value of their works, 5^s."

(These works consist of finding men "to lift the hay," and at one bedrip.)

" And all the said Custumars shall give at Michaelmas of certain aid, 60^s. And each of them shall give at the feast of St Martin 3 hens and 1 cock, worth 4^d. And of certain view at Michaelmas, 2^s. The pleas and perquisites of Court are worth yearly there, 6^s 8^d.

" Summa tallag⁹ cert viš pñt t pquiš. lxxiiij. š."

¹ Charter Rolls, 20 Edw. I.

Tho. de Abberbury.

Donington } libera waren' Berks.
Bradele }

"*Walter de Edbbur'*, brother of the said Master *Thomas de Edbburbur'* is his next heir, æt. 40.

"Total of this extent, 21^l 16^s 11^d. Whereof there ought to be repaid to the King at "St. Michael, 6^s 8^d. And so there remains clearly, 21^l 10 3^d."

After the death of Thomas de Abbresbury a dispute followed, by which a resident of Tingewick in this neighbourhood took forcible possession of this manor.

"*William de Tyngewyk*, deceased (or *Tynchewyk*).

"Writ dated 28 June, 9 Edw. 2.

"Oxon.—Inquisition taken at *Sulthorn*, 10 October, 10 Edw. 2.

"*Richard de Abberbur'* formerly held the Manor of *Sulthorn* and afterwards Master *Richard de Middelton* came and deraigned¹ that Manor in the King's Court by virtue of a certain Statute "concerning Merchants, out of the hands of the same *Richard de Abberbur'*, and so became seized "thereof, excepting one messuage, one virgate and a half of land, and 40^s. of rent; and *Middelton* "being so seized, *John de Lewgenore* and *William de Tynchewyk* entered that Manor by force and "arms, and continued their seisin in that Manor for six days, until the same *John de Leukenore* made "to the same *William de T.* a charter of feoffment of the same Manor; and so the same *William* "held that Manor by force and arms until the day of his death. The Manor is held of *Thomas de Bykenor'* as of *Richard's Castle* by the service of 1lb. of cummin yearly for all service. There is "there one capital messuage, worth nothing yearly beyond the reprise.² In demesne there are "360^a worth yearly 9^l, price of the acre 6^d; 16^a meadow, 24^s (18^d the acre); and a certain several "pasture, 3^s. There are 5 free tenants, who pay yearly 29^s at four terms; and certain freeholders "pay xxvij. s. at two terms. There are 16 virgates of land in villenage, rendering yearly 60^s at 4 "terms. Every virgate of land shall do work from the feast of the Nativity of St. *John the Baptist* "to the Gules of *August* every other work day except Sundays and Festivals, and the work is worth "one halfpenny: and from the Gules of *August* to the feast of *Saint Michael* every work day, except "Sundays and feast days, and the work is worth 1^d. The total is 64^s. The pleas and perquisites "of Court are worth 40^d.

"*John de Tynchewyk*, brother and heir, æt. 30."

Notwithstanding this temporary alienation, the descendants of the former occupants continued to hold this manor. In 1347 "*John de Abberbury, Chivaler*" was in possession, and a few years later *Richard de Abberbury*. When King Richard II. came to his majority he conferred several manors upon Sir Richard Abberbury, who had been the guardian of his youth, in consideration of his having spent his patrimony upon the welfare of his royal charge. In the Charter Rolls of Richard II.'s reign his estates are mentioned.

"Ric'us Abberbury.

<p>"Sulderne maner' "Blechesdon maner' "Stepelaston maner' "Hanewell maner' "Sibbeford maner' "Thorpe maner' "Listele maner'</p>	}	Oxon.
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¹ Disrationavit: This is a legal term for proving a right to something by disproving that of a rival claimant; to disreason him and to show yourself reasonable.

² Reprise is a word used for reductions, and payments out of a

manor or other estate, as rent-charges, annuities, etc., and therefore the clear yearly value of an estate is calculated at so much besides all reprises.

“Donington maner’
 “Winterborne maner’ } Berks.”
 “Pesemere maner’

In 1385 he founded an almshouse or hospital at Donnington, which he endowed with two acres of land in that place and with the whole manor of Iffley. In 1388 he was expelled the Court by the discontented lords for his attachment to the King, and shortly after, in 1392, he laid the foundation of the Priory of the Holy Trinity at Donnington close by his hospital. This house he endowed with lands and houses in Throp (Kidlington) and Souldern. At the Inquisition taken after his death in 1399 eleven messuages, four acres, thirteen virgates of land and twenty-nine acres of meadow were assessed to the Priory of Donnington in the same parishes.¹

After the death of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, in 1449, the jury found him to have been possessed jointly with Alice his wife, of twelve messuages, fourteen virgates of land, and twenty acres of meadow, with their appurtenances in Thorp, Cudlington (Kidlington), and Sulthorne, and the moiety of 100 acres of wood with appurtenances in Ewelme, and the advowson of the Church of Ewelme and of the hospital there. These, with many other large possessions, continued with Alice, his widow, who lived to a good old age in her mansion at Ewelme, and died there May 10, 1475, and was buried in the Parish Church on the south side of the high altar, under a rich tomb of alabaster. John, Duke of Suffolk, inherited the manors of Sulthorn, Throp, Hook Norton, and Kidlington, which his mother had held in dowry.

In 1458 (36 Hen. VI.) “John Dynham miles,” and twelve others were in possession of this manor.²

Having thus travelled four hundred years from the time of the Norman Conquest, we may here make a brief halt to look back and picture to ourselves the condition of this village during that period. The village lay in a hollow, amid ground rising on every side, and was reached by a gentle descent from the old Roman road on the east side, where the main way of approach still remains. It must even in those distant days, before the hand of civilizing man had much changed the face of nature, have been prettily situated. The slope of Aynhoe Park, with its ornamental belts of trees, did not then cover its northern side, neither did the tall elms of the present Manor House overshadow its western side, but gorse and thorn bushes and ferns brightened the face of these and the other surrounding uplands, around the large corn-field near the houses of the inhabitants, where the latter might be often seen busy in their daily labour. The first object which met the eye on entering the inclosure, in which the houses of the inhabitants lay nestled together, was the *Town Well*. This was an artificial reservoir formed to catch the stream, which never fails to flow from a spring rising in a field now called *Bovewell*, and running into the brook which divides the present counties of Oxford and Northampton. Going to or from the well might be seen daily some village girls and women, with bare arms, legs, and feet, and thin short gowns and single petticoats, with pitchers and pails upon their heads,³ a scene suggestive to a lover of the picturesque rather than of comfort or well-doing in the actors in it. On the rising ground above the well stood the chief house, the capital messuage or Manor House, the dwelling-house attached to the demesne lands, in what is now an enclosed field adjoining the churchyard. This house differed little in size or convenience from the cottages of the labourers, or the houses of the villein tenants. It does not seem to have had any garden or orchard or enclosure, or other source of

¹ History of Kidlington, p. 118, by Mrs. Stapleton (Oxford Historical Society).

² Inq. p. m.

³ Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley*, chap. VIII.

profit attached to it, for in 1316 it is described as of no value beyond the cost of its maintenance and repair. It was occupied by the reeve or bailiff, who in the absence of the lords had charge of the manor. Below this house stood the Church, and beyond, on still lower ground, stood the parish priest's Manse, with two fish ponds in the adjoining premises.¹ The fish pond was then as much a necessity as the dove-cote or poultry-house. Here lived the lazy carp, the pike, the perch, the bream, the tench, and other fish that might be wanted for the table. A slow stream of running water kept the fish ponds fresh, and at one end was formed a "stew" or small tank to preserve the fish that were netted. An open space within the village was reserved for health and recreation, called "The Green." Near these spots the houses of the villagers were clustered, some near the brook ("atte streme"), others near the well ("atte welle," "de fonte"), and near the Green ("atte Grene"). They were little better than rude hovels, built of local stone, and covered with thatch, having only one room, and that without floor or ceiling or chimney, seldom divided, except when a hurdle was stretched across it to keep out the domestic cow or sheep or pigs or poultry. The roadway between these houses leading to the church formed the street of the village. On one side of it was a raised pathway paved with stones, called "The Causeway," which the villagers were obliged to keep in repair (still remaining). Three stone Crosses were prominent objects; one in the churchyard, where its base and steps may still be seen; another on the high ground west of the village, called in late times "Coles' Cross," of which the base only now remains; and a third on a site not known. A Mill, necessary for grinding the villagers' corn, stood at a little distance from the village, where the present mill stands. This was commonly called "The Mill Noble," because that sum of money was paid for the tithe due from the land belonging to it, which was in later times commuted for a yearly modus of 6s. 8d. Besides the Town Well there was another spring, supposed to have been dedicated to St. Chad, in that part of the open field which took its name from it. The river Cherwell is about a mile and a half distant from the village, and forms the western boundary of the parish.

In 1306 the landholders numbered 48. This gives the amount of the adult population, the heads of households and families, and implies a general population of about 200, more or less, at the beginning of the XIVth century.

Corn-land was rising in value in all parts of England in the latter part of the XIIIth, and the early years of the following, century. Thus in 1306, 240 acres of arable land in this manor were valued at 4d. per acre, but ten years later 360 acres were valued at 6d. per acre, showing not only that the arable land had risen in value, but that a further quantity of waste land had been then brought under the plough in consequence of this increased value. Compared with the rents of arable land since the Norman Conquest, and the decline, which followed in the middle of the XIVth century, these rents were high, equivalent to 8s. and 12s. of money of present value, though below what was occasionally reached at this time, when much corn-land was let as high as 8d., or even 9d., per acre.²

May-day, which fell in the middle of our month of May, was one of the most joyous holidays of the year, for the winter was past and spring was come. And we can well imagine what the arrival of springtime was to the generality of a people whose winters were spent in huts, cold and

¹ "May 17th, 1723. The pond in the old Orchard was somewhat enlarged, and 31 brace of carp we took out, and put in again 30 brace of 'em."

"Nov. 8th, 1723. I enlarg'd the pond in the new Orchard by taking down the Hovel, and carrying it nearer the wall towards

"the yard, and fish'd the pond and took out 8 brace of fine carp and 10 other brace of different sizes I put into the pond in the old orchard, most of the carp being small ones" (Note in a book of memoranda).

² "England in the XVth century," W. Denton.

dark, huddled round the central fire, and in its smoke, without candles, going to bed at sunset, and rising early before daylight, eating only salted meat, fruit and coarse bread, and longing impatiently for the time to return when they could live again, with shutters down and doors open, in the warmth and light of beautiful spring and summer.

The various holidays of the Church were more or less observed by cessation from work, the chief of these being "The Feast," or Wake, always observed on the first Sunday after Sept. 19th (old style Sept. 8th), that being the anniversary of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to whom the Parish Church is dedicated.

FROM THE XVITH TO THE XVIIITH CENTURY.

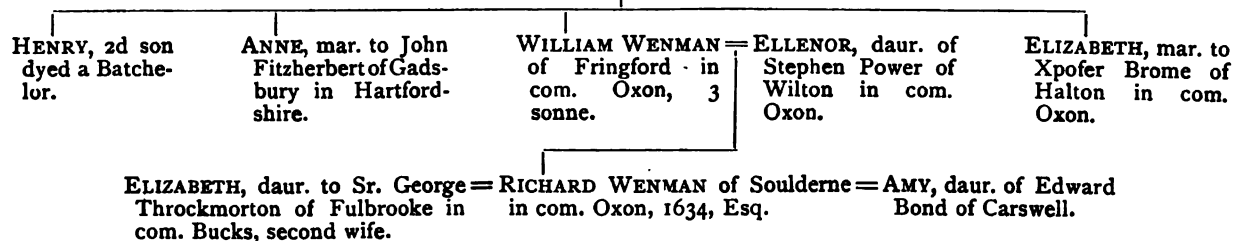
In the XVIth century we reach new generations of men, and altered habits and customs. No Lord of the Manor had resided on his estate here since the days previous to the Norman Conquest. But the feudal system was now gone, and free men purchased land, and held it as their very own. Early in the XVIth century this manor was in the possession of members of the Throckmorton family, and the owner took up his residence here either permanently or occasionally. He probably enlarged and improved the old Manor House, adopting it to what were at that time considered to be the simple requirements of a country gentleman's house. The only trace remaining of this family's connection with Souldern, is a memorial in the Parish Church,¹ in the chancel a brass consisting of a heart supported by two hands, with three scrolls issuing from the heart. The following words are written on the scrolls: "Credo quod Redemptor meus vivit et in novissimo die de tra surrecturus sū et in carne mea videbo Deu Salvatorē meū." Inscribed upon the heart are the words, "Jhu mcy."; and below the brass, Here lyeth buried John Throckmorton the son of Hugh Throckmorton (gent) by Elizabeth his wife, "who died 6th October, in the year of our Lord, 1537."

Mr. Hugh Throckmorton was living in 1571, for in that year he presented to this rectory. Sir George Throckmorton in 1611 was owner of his ancestral estate, and in that year sold the advowson of the Parish Church. Some years later the Manor House was occupied by Mr. Richard Wenman, a member of the family resident at Fringford, and connected by marriage with the Throckmorton family. At the Herald's Visitation of 1634 he gave in his pedigree:

"WAYNEMAN OF CARSWELL."

Arms: quarterly of twelve (the same as Wayneman of Witney).

Sr THO. WENMAN of Carswell = URSULAH, daur. & heire of Tho.
in com. Oxon, Knt. Giffard of Twiford in com. Bucks.



Through failure of male issue, the Throckmorton property passed to new owners. "Henry L^d Compton, Sir John Arundell of Lanhern in the county of Cornwall, Paul Tracy, Esq., John

¹ This has been recently restored by the present Sir Nicholas William Throckmorton.

"Dormer, Esq.,¹ lawfully seized of their demeyn as of fee c'oparcenary² in the right of their wives, "or by part respectively of and in the mannor and lordship of Soulderne alias Sulthorne for divers "and several valuable considerations and sums of money sold the said Mannor and Royalties and "divers messuages, lands, and tenements unto John Stutsbury of Soulderne Gent., Rob^t Weedon of "Soulderne Gent. and to John Weedon his son, and to their heirs and assigns for ever."³

FAMILY OF WEEDON.

Robert Weedon.

The purchaser of this manor was a resident in the village. His name appears in 1585 in the records of the Archdeacon of Oxford's Court, to which he was summoned as an old inhabitant of the village well acquainted with its history. He had married a daughter of John Stutsbury,⁴ al^s Stuchbury, a yeoman of like position with himself, then resident in Souldern, and had risen to considerable wealth. It was a further rise when, with the assistance of his son and father-in-law, he added to his possessions the Manor estate.

John Weedon.

He married into the family of Williamson of Northamptonshire,⁵ and came into possession of an estate at Longdon in Staffordshire.⁶ He was a keen and far-sighted man of business, who saw before many of his day the advantage of inclosures, for soon after succeeding to his newly-purchased estate in Souldern, he formed a plan of bringing together the demesne lands which lay scattered about in the open field, which led to the Inclosure effected in 1613. He and his family were Roman Catholics, taking the side of the King against the Parliament in the Civil War which began in his lifetime. During the Commonwealth all persons who had fought for the King were styled "Malignants." The country was divided into ten military governments, each with a major-general at its head, who was empowered to disarm all Papists and Royalists and to arrest suspected persons. Funds for the support of this military despotism were provided by an ordinance of the Council of State, which enacted that all who had at any time borne arms for the King should pay every year a tenth part of their income, in spite of the Act of Oblivion, as a fine for their Royalist tendencies; and all Roman Catholic proprietors, who had shown no goodwill to the Parliament, even though they had taken no part in the war, were punished by the forfeiture of a third of their estates.⁷ John Weedon's property thus came under sequestration.⁸ Some proceedings connected with this have been recorded:

¹ A son of John Dynham, a former owner, had married (1) Elizabeth, d. of Sir John Dormer, and (2) Penelope, d. of Sir Richard Wenman.

² Coparcenary is where persons have equal portions in the inheritance of an ancestor, and by law are the issue female, which, in default of heirs male, come in equality to the lands of their ancestors (Jacob's Law Dictionary).

³ In a book of memoranda in the parish chest.

⁴ In a deed detailing the particulars of a Chancery suit relating to tithes in this parish (*temp.* James I.), John Weedon refers to his grandfather, John Stuchbury.

⁵ "From Northants, Wm. Williamson, S.J., 1626, aged 51. "His sisters were Bridget, widow of Peter Poole; Helen, wife of "John Weedon, gentleman; Alice, wife of Wm. Weepdale, "gentleman; Catherine and Jane. His brothers were Edmund, "Thomas, Robert, George" (Foley's Records of the Society of Jesus).

⁶ "A mile and a half from Longdon Green is Longdon Hall, "which formerly belonged to the Weedons, a family now extinct. "The house is now reduced to a common farmhouse" (Shaw's History of Staffordshire, vol. I., p. 222).

The earliest Church Register at Longdon begins in 1687; and some old records of the Manor Court Rolls were found a few years ago in the vestry chest, and were then sent to the Salt Library at Stafford.

⁷ Green's History of the English People, chap. VIII.

⁸ In the Calendar for Advance of Money, part I., p. 443, there is mention of "Thomas Weedon, Papist, Hanley Castle, co. Worcester, and Brandwood, co. Stafford," whose property was also sequestered. Of this property part was a debt of £500 or £600, due from John Hill, of Woodhouse, Salop.

"22nd June, 1652, Hill pleads that in 8 Charles he borrowed "£300 of Weedon, and by indenture with him and Wm. Maund "of Chesterton, co. Oxon, granted a rent charge of £24 on lands

“Calendar of Committee for the advance of money.¹

“JOHN WEEDON, sequestered papist and delinquent, Longdon Hall, Staffordshire, and Souldern, Oxon, and Bernard and Ignatius his sons.

“Information that William Rufford of Nether Sapy co. Hereford owes John Weedon £500.
“Information that John Weedon is a Papist, forwarded the rebellion in Ireland, and was active for the king in both wars, and that Willoughby Manley, and two others owe him £1000 on security of land, as also Richard Packes of Mountsorrel £250, and 8 years interest.

“14 Jan. Information that the three Weedons are all convicted Papists, and owe the late King £426 6s. 8d.

“15 July, 1651. Information that W^m Rufford owes John Weedon £200, of which £100 is still unpaid, and the bond is in the hands of John Fidal, Sir Robert Harlow's servant.

“3rd Feb., 1652. Information that Rufford in 2 Charles mortgaged lands in Sapy for payment of £400 to Weedon and afterwards borrowed £100, so that principal and interest are now £900.

“6 Feb. Order thereon that Weedon and Rufford appear to show cause why $\frac{2}{3}$ of the debt should not be paid to the State on account of Weedon's recusancy.

“May, 1651. Information by Robert Turner that John and Ignatius Weedon held houses and lands in Longdon and elsewhere in Staffordshire; that Walter Collins of Chardley co. Salop had a lease of $\frac{2}{3}$ thereof 12 years since the Northern Commission for 41 years at £33 6s. 8d., but has paid no rent either to the Receiver of the late King or since, and the said $\frac{2}{3}$ with arrears are not under sequestration, but concealed.

“18 June, 1651. Turner begs an order for the levying of the said arrears, the sequestration of $\frac{2}{3}$ of the estate, leave to be tenant thereof at a fair rent and good security and consideration for his discovery. Order that the lands be sequestered, and the profits received by the State, unless the parties show good cause to the contrary, etc., etc.

“2 Dec., 1653. Affidavit made by John Weedon that Richard Packes and Richard his son and heir borrowed £200 of him in 1636 to be repaid by £50 yearly for 7 years, but no more than £50 or £60 had been received thereon.”²

“Committee for Compounding.

“John and Bernard Weedon, Souldern, and Ignatius Weedon, all Recusants. 22 Jan. 1652.³

“On request of County Committee for leave to discharge $\frac{1}{3}$ of the estate of Bernard Weedon sequestered for delinquency, the other $\frac{2}{3}$ being sequestered for recusancy and for their own discharge from the rent thereof. They are to certify when the rent was due, and when the order of the Barons of the Exchequer of 15 Nov., 1650 for discharge of the estate was brought to them.

“10 Feb. Order on hearing and debate confirming the discharge of $\frac{1}{3}$ of the estate, if “in co. Salop, to Maund and Weedon, etc.” Thus it appears that the Worcestershire and Oxfordshire branches of this family were closely connected.

In Foley's Records of the Society of Jesus, there is an entry, 1658, March: “My name is *Thomas Weedon*, alias *Williamson*. I am son of *Thomas Weedon* and *Elisabeth Collins*; was born in the Parish of *Hanley Castle, Worcestershire*, Feb. 12th, 1637, and am now in my 21st year. I have spent six years in Brabant and Mechlin, and two years at St. Omer's in my education. My parents and relations are of a noble stock, but

“their circumstances do not now as formerly correspond; they are all Catholics: I have one brother and five sisters.” The English College Diary states that he entered in the name of Thomas *Williamson* of Worcestershire, October 11th, 1658. He was finally ordained priest, and sent into England in January, 1663.

¹ Part II., p. 700.

² Part IV., p. 2943.

³ The last court of Souldern Manor appears to have been held in that year.

"there be no other proof of delinquency than that deemed insufficient by the Barons of the Exchequer.

"2 Sept., 1653. The County Committee report their survey of the estates of John and Bernard Weedon, which they have let at £330 10^s. $\frac{2}{3}$ to be paid to the State, and $\frac{1}{3}$ to the recusants.

"13 Jan., 1654. John and Bernard Weedon beg to contract on the Recusant's Act of Oct., 1653 for $\frac{2}{3}$ of their sequestered estates.

"13 Jan. Referred to Reading.

"17 May. Bernard Weedon begs to be admitted tenant of $\frac{2}{3}$ of his estate at Longdon co. Stafford, it being much impoverished by the ill usage of the tenants.

"17 May. The Registrar and Auditor to certify, and Reading to prepare a lease.

"(Claimant on the Estate.)

"17 Feb., 1652. Walter Collins of Chorley, co. Stafford, petitions that he compounded in 1638 with the Commissioners for the North for the estates of John, Bernard, and Ignatius Weedon, all recusants in co. Stafford, at £33 6^s. 8^d. rent, which was settled as part of the Revenue, and the Revenue Committee ordered the Barons of the Exchequer to take care for its receipts. In 1649 the County Committee confirmed his composition, but in 1651 the Barons of the Exchequer decided that the estate was not sequestered and bound him to stand to their order, and the County Committee boxed the estate as belonging to the Weedons. Begs an order to the said Committee to cease prosecution thereof. Noted that he is to amend his petition, there being neither sequestration nor composition in 1638.

"10 March. If there be no certificate the County Committee are to certify as desired.

"12 Oct., 1654. Collins' petition that his father held land in Burntwood near Lichfield which has descended to him as heir, and which he has held 20 years, but now the County Committee threaten to sequester it as belonging to Thomas Weedon recusant. Begs examination of his title, and the rents on security continue.

"10 Oct. The County Committee to certify.

"Lessees of the estate.

"12 Oct., 1653. The contract made by the County Committee of Oxon with Thomas Higgins of Co. Oxon for $\frac{2}{3}$ of John and Bernard Weedon's estate for 7 years from 29 Sept., 1653, confirmed by the Committee for Compounding.

"17 May, 1655. Higgins complains that John Hawtin formerly in possession of part of the premises detains the same from him on pretence of some lease from John Weedon. Yet Petitioner has been obliged to pay his full rent reserved on the said lease. Begs that the County Committee may have directions to put him into possession, and that Hawtin may be called to account.

"17 May. Hawtin ordered to deliver up possession to petitioner, or show cause within a fortnight.

"26 June. Hawtin pleads that in 1649 he had a lease for 7 years from John Weedon of a house and ground called Woolshed, which was part of Weedon's third part at the yearly rent of £40 a rack rent; this he paid to Weedon, till by him directed to pay it to Higgins five years ago, which he has done ever since, but being disturbed in his possession by Higgins he detained the last $\frac{1}{2}$ year's rent. Begs that he may not be ejected, having built on the premises, and has been at

"great charges in repairs, his term ending next May day. Higgins has distrained petitioner's cattle since obtaining the order of the Committee for compounding.

"26 June. Referred to County Committee."

Bernard Weedon.

His forefathers had held the rank of Gentlemen, which implies that they were not engaged in any trade or profession, but lived on their own independent means. Bernard Weedon aimed at higher rank, and claimed to have a place among the armigeri—persons entitled to bear arms. The coat of arms granted to Bernard Weedon was "Argent, 2 bars gules in chief, 3 martlets, sable impaled with gules, a cross or,"¹ and by this grant he passed into the first rank of gentleness. He then proceeded to establish his position by a house and establishment suitable to it.

Mr. Ruskin has remarked that the great architectural power of the XIIIth century, of which England affords many noble examples, found employment in the construction of ecclesiastical and of public buildings, but was seldom in any sense extended to the requirements of private or domestic life. The Manor House here, however improved by the Throckmortons, was still remaining a mean residence of stone, and probably thatch. Mr. Bernard Weedon, therefore, soon after succeeding to his patrimony, pulled it down, and in its stead, and on another site, built a new and larger residence at the opposite end of the village, on the brow of the hill overlooking the Cherwell Valley, from that time known as Souldern Manor House.

Bernard Weedon's name is mentioned in a Chancery deed of Charles II., 1676. He died three years later, aged 72 years.

"Bernardus Weedon, sen^x, secundum Ritus Ecclie Anglicanæ sepul. Martii 31, 1679."²

His brother Ignatius died four years later.

"Ignatius Weedon, senex, secundum ritus Ecclesie sepult. Octobris 2, 1683."²

His widow outlived him ten years.

"Maria Weedon, vidua, octogenaria secundum ritus Ecclie Anglicanæ. Nov. 13, 1689."²

John Weedon.

Son and heir of Bernard W.

The Weedon estate at this time consisted of 17½ yard lands = 530 acres, more or less.³

"Soulderne by the inhabitants themselves hath always been taxt at 46 yard lands. All yard lands paid equally in taxes, as being laid out equally at the first inclosure, and the same rate for tythe was then set upon all, except Mr. Weedon's ½ yard lands, who paying so considerable a summe, and being so powerful in the town, procured some little abatement of that rate w^h all other yard lands paid, the then Incumbent Norbury consenting to anything, least his fraudulent Title to the advowson should be disturbed, and other Inconveniences to which he was obnoxious might be brought upon him.

"The lordship of Souldern, in y^e County of Oxford, belonging to John Weedon, Esq^r., exactly surveyed and plotted, 1693, by Humphrey Sparry, Gentleman."⁴

¹ Weeding, Wedone, co. Bucks, Dorset and Lancashire, *temp.* Henry III., Rauf de Wedone (Papworth, p. 19).

² Souldern Church Registers.

³ The number of acres generally contained in a "yard land": "Fifteen or sixteen acres are allowed to the making up of halfe a yard land in Souldern, w^h appears by the division of a yard land into quarterns or four parts, and of quarterns into eight parts,

"every eighth part of a quartern being an acre or thereabouts, w^h said division of land is a general rule throughout the Town, so that thirty or thirty-two acres generally make a yard land, tho there are some that far exceed that number" (Entry in a book of memoranda).

⁴ Written on a sheet of paper preserved in the parish chest.

	a.	r.	p.
1. The Homestead	2	1	—
2. The Pigeon-House Close	4	3	2½
3. The Foldyard and Grove	—	—	20
4. The Leycroft	19	3	12
5. The Great Pofley	11	3	35
6. The Hearne's piece	11	—	10
7. The Little Pofley	7	3	4
8. The Foxhall	18	3	31
9. The Hadon's piece	6	1	30
10. The Hailemead	19	1	21
11. The one part of it	3	1	31
12. The other part of it	10	2	20
13. The Warren's Close	23	3	29
14. The Sling	2	—	20
15. The Hill grounds	29	—	—
16. The Padack	3	3	12
17. The Coppice	11	—	35
18. The Clifford Over Close	8	3	33
19. The Clifford Lower Close	7	1	28
20. The Woolfige	40	—	20
21. The Great Chisnel	66	3	10
22. The Further Chisnel	40	2	6
23. The Lungell Mead	4	2	4
24. Tyth land	—	—	24
25. The Goldern Meadow	17	2	16
26. The Chisnel Meadow	19	1	—
27. The Knole	10	3	3
28. The Little Knole	3	2	36
29. The Cockham Meadow	7	3	5
30. The Oat Meadow	13	—	23
31. The Padack	6	1	8
32. The Great Spinie	23	3	7
33. The Little Spinie	4	1	15
34. The Wellesmore	32	2	4
35. The Dockam Meadow	9	2	25
36. The Hither Bayly's Bush	13	3	14
37. The Further Bayly's Bush	13	2	—

530 — 33

A map¹ dated the same year gives the acreage at 543 acres. The difference in these measures is accounted for by the various estimates of a yard land.

John Weedon held this estate twenty-three years.

"Johannes Weedon, generosus sepult. April 15, 1702, aged 57."

¹ This map is in Col. Cox's possession.

His wife Frances predeceased him in 1701, aged sixty. She was buried close to the south door of the Parish Church. The family coat-of-arms is engraven on her tomb. He was succeeded by a son of the same name.

John Weedon.

During his tenure the estate became gradually reduced. Two yard lands (64 acres) were sold to Mr. Cartwright of Aynhoe, and one yard land (32 acres) to Mr. King, of Souldern, before the close of the XVIIth century. In 1701 the estate was reckoned at fourteen yard lands (448 acres), and in a map two years later at 409 acres. In 1708 (6 Q. Anne) an Act of Parliament was obtained for the sale of the settled estates to pay debts, and to portion younger children. A memorandum¹ dated Michaelmas, 1710, describes the purchases :

	a.	r.	p.
Mr. Snead's purchase	102	1	1½
Matt. Hearne's bargain	110	0	0
Henry Bennett's do.	54	1	1
Mr. Gough had out of estate	126	2	16
	395	1	18½

"Nov. y^e 8th, 1710. John Weedon Esq^e was buried, aged 42.

"March y^e 24th, 1713-14, was buried Bernard Weedon Esq^e.

"Mrs. Weedon buried July y^e 8th, 1708"—described on her memorial monument as "Elizabeth, wife of Bernard Weedon, Jun^r."

Whatever remained of the estates and of the manorial rights John Weedon left to Samuel, the eldest son of Samuel and Alicia Cox, then a child of five years old, subject to the payment of certain annuities to his brothers, Thomas and William, his uncle Bernard, his sister Mary, and his brother-in-law, Charles Howes.² His house and furniture he left to his widow. But his will was disputed by his brother. The cause was tried at Oxford, and the will upheld. Samuel Cox then compromised matters by paying a considerable sum of money to extinguish any claims of the Weedon family. A few years later, in 1718, Dr. Rawlinson, visiting Souldern, noted the possession of the manor by Mr. Cox :

"The manor of this place belonged to the Weedons,³ who held Courts here. The Manor House is now occupied by Mr. Cox."

"March 19, 1728, was buried Mary Weedon."

It is not known for what reason John Weedon thus alienated his property, but from this time the family fell into poverty.

Thomas Weedon died in 1736, and his widow, being obliged to apply for parish relief, was at once removed from Souldern to the place (now not known) where she had gained a settlement.

"1736. Oct. y ^e 8. Charges for going to islop	}	3 ^s 6 ^d
"with Mrs. Weedon ⁴		
"Spent when I went to (?) to get	}	6 ^d
"Mrs. Weedon login		

¹ In Col. Cox's possession.

² Of Kimble, Bucks. See Payne's Eng. Cath. Non-jurors, p. 12.

³ A member of this family appears to have removed to Stoke Lyne. In the registers of that parish there are two entries :

"Jane, daughter of Henry Weedon and Mary his wife, was baptized November 22nd, 1703."

"Mary, daughter of Henry Weedon and Mary his wife, was borne Septem. 12th, and baptized Octob. 2nd, 1710."

⁴ Souldern Constable's Account. The magistrates probably met at Islip. There is no trace of the name Weedon to be found there in the registers.

"1737. Dec. 13. For goinge to Islip with Mr. Tho^s Weedon's wife about her settlement.

"My horse, and my self 3^s 6^d (1)

William Weedon died in 1741.

"Buried Jan^y 10, 1741, Mr. Will^m Weedon."

It is a melancholy ending of the history of a family, who once had large possessions and high estate, to read the name of another descendant among the recipients of parish relief on the day following her husband's funeral:

"Jan. 11. 1741. Pd Mrs. Weedon 2^s 6^d."

Her household goods were then forfeited to the parish, but were allowed to remain in her possession.

"Jan^y y^e 12th, 1741. A count of things delivered to W^m Bailes belonging to y^e town for the "use of Mrs. Weedon.

"One Warming pan, one friing pan, one poridge pot, one kettel, one bed, one bedsted, one "pair of Pilows, one hacket, three chairs, three blankets, one coverlid for a bed, one piece of "wanscot for a screen, one Book wrot by Bishop Cranmer, twenty fagots of wood, about 2 "hundred of hard wood, one box."¹

The weekly allowance was continued until April 10, 1745. This recipient is always described as "Mrs. Weedon," in distinction to the other recipients of parish relief, and while the allowance to the latter varied from 6^d. to 1s. 6^d., that to Mrs. Weedon was always 2s. 6^d.

"April 18, 1745. Widow Weedon was buried."

In the Overseer's accounts there is an entry:

"A Coffin for Mrs. Weedon 9^s

"For the Bell and grave 1^s 6^d

"Pd Wido Bates for y^e shroud an makin 5^s 2^d

"Pd W^m Venet for looking to Mrs. Wedon 8^s

"Gave y^e man that carried her 1^s

"Made of Mrs. Weedon's goods £1 0^s 6^d"

Monuments to the memory of several members of this family may still be seen near the north door of the Parish Church. One of these has a coat-of-arms carved as an escutcheon, impaled with the arms of the wife, but neither name nor date is now visible. Argent two bars gules, upon a chief 3 birds are impaled with a cross.²

Another stone on the opposite side of the church has the names of Weedon and Gough upon it.

THE MANOR HOUSE

is built in the prevalent style of the XVIIth century, of which many examples may be found in the villages of Oxfordshire. Its substantial walls of gray stone, now in great part covered with ivy, the high-pitched roof and well-proportioned chimneys, were all doubtless in harmony with the broad-mullioned windows which formerly existed. The plan of the house is simple; the east front is unbroken, but towards the west a pair of gabled wings project on either side, and the door between

¹ Souldern Overseer's Accounts.

² See page 19. The last member of this family (living within the remembrance of old people thirty years ago) was

drunken, dissipated man, who fell down in a fit in the Bear Inn, and there died.

the wings was the original entrance, at one time surmounted by a cupola. In front of the house there was a small fence, and leading up to the main entrance was a fine avenue of sycamore-trees, of which only one or two now remain. Not far from the house is the ancient socket of "Coles's Cross," and near to this is a group of noble elm-trees, which, standing on high ground, form a conspicuous landmark for miles around. The date of the erection of this house has not been recorded, but a clue to this may be found in the figures 1665, which, with some rude crosses, have been cut into the window of a room known as the "Old Vestry." Several changes have been at different times made in the external appearance of this house. At the end of the last century the old mullioned windows were replaced by common sash windows of modern shape; the cupola over the west door was removed; the principal entrance was changed to the east side; the avenue of sycamore-trees was cut down, and an orchard planted as a screen from the south-west. Still later, in the middle of the present century, further alterations were made by Dr. Dolman when resident in the house and grounds; the small fence in front of the house was levelled; the stables were rebuilt on a new site; the garden was much enlarged; and a new approach was opened from the village. A room in the upper part of this house was for many years set apart as a private chapel for the Roman Catholic families to whom it belonged. This room measured about thirty feet in length, was open to the roof, and was lighted by three dormer windows. A third of its space was screened off by a wooden partition to form a sanctuary. Within this was the altar, with wooden rails in front of it, and an adjoining room in the north-west corner served as a vestry. During some alterations in 1877 a closet was discovered between the floor of the chapel and the ceiling of the room below. It was part of a wide chimney-stack, about seven feet deep, but narrow, the recess being just within the door of the chapel, and capable of being fastened on the inside by a sliding bolt. This was evidently a chamber of concealment, the secret of which was so well kept that it was known only to the owner of the house and his son, who handed it down from generation to generation with the most solemn confidence. It was no doubt the priest's hiding-place, such as in the time of the penal laws was generally to be found in the houses of Roman Catholics. This chapel was in use until 1781, when, on the death of Mr. Samuel Cox, it was permanently closed, and the sacred vessels, together with the vestments, were removed to London.

This house was occupied for several years by its founder, but after Bernard Weedon's death in 1679, and the family's removal to Longdon Hall, it was let to

*Richard Kilby, Esq.,*¹

who was in some way a connection of the Weedon family. He (1) married Frances ———

"Pas^s Frances Kilby uxor Richardi sepult. secundum ritus Ecclⁱæ Anglicanæ Augusti 16, "1672."

(2) Alice, daughter of William Rainolds al^s Reynolds of Cassington, Oxon.²

Mr. Reynolds³ had married Alice daughter of — Whitgrave of Moseley, Staffordshire, who

¹ His descent is not certain. A Richard Kilby (Fellow since 1578) was elected Rector of Lincoln Coll., Oxford, in 1590. A descendant of his may have been the Squire of Souldern, and at the age of eighteen one of the parties in a juvenile contest.

"In October, 1636, Richard Kilby and John Webberly, two "Fellows, fell out and fought, and 'Mr. Kilbye's face was sore "bruised and beaten.' The College ordered Webberly 'to pay "the charge of the surgeon for healing of Mr. Kilbye's face'" The Colleges of Oxford, by A. Clark: Lincoln Coll.).

² For an account of this William Reynolds and his relations, see A. Wood's *Life and Times*, vol. I., p. 419 (Oxford Historical Society).

³ Besides Alice, the wife of Richard Kilby, he had a son, Francis, who at the time of the battle of Worcester was residing with his uncle, being pupil to Father Huddleston, the chaplain. When the King in his flight rested for a time at Moseley, young Reynolds was sent to keep watch. This and other duties he performed so well that at the Restoration a pension was granted to him, which was continued for some generations.

after her husband's death on November 5, 1661, removed to Souldern, to find a home in her daughter's house.

"Alice Reynolds vidua vetula sepulta secundum ritus ecclesiæ Anglicanæ. Aug. 8, "1694."¹

Richard Kilby died in 1693, aged eighty-four.

"Ricardus Kilby Armiger senex P^{re} obiit Sept. 11 sepult Sept 13 secundum ritus ecclia^e Anglicanæ."

His widow long survived him.

"December y^e 4th 1714 was buried M^{rs} Alice Kilby."

He left four children, one son and three daughters:

(1) *Robert*, his heir, continued his residence in the Manor House.

In 1715 the Roman Catholics in England who refused to take the oaths to King George I. were compelled to register their names and estates. Among the non-jurors appear the names of:

"Robert Kilby of Souldern, gent, Freehold estate there, and Hyett House in his own "possession, £107 18^s.

"Henry Bennett of Souldern, carpenter. Freehold there, and at Hethe, £1 10^s."²

The system of formal gardening was much in vogue in England about this time, and something of this fashion had been introduced into the premises of the Manor House here, for, among other bequests, Mr. Robert Kilby received from his father "his two stones or vases, and his "stone table," as heirlooms, which the latter had evidently set much store by as ornaments of his garden. These are still standing in front of the Manor House."³

"Sept. 11, 1754, Ann, y^e wife of Mr. Robert Kilby, was buried."

A memorial in the Parish Church states that she died on Sept. 4, aged eighty-four years.

"March 15, 1757, Mr. Robert Kilby was buried."

A memorial in the church styles him "Gent.," and states that he died on March 12. *Ob. s.p.*

(2) *Alice*, or *Alicia*, born in 1676, who married Samuel Cox, Esq., of Farningham Lodge, Kent. The marriage settlement, drawn up in 1704, is preserved among the family deeds.

(3) *Jane*. Died unmarried.

"Decemb. 19th, 1714, was buried Mrs. Jane Kilby."

This burial was a fortnight after that of her mother.

(4) *Mary*. Died unmarried.

"Mrs. Mary Kilbie was buried 8ber. 22, 1725."

Thus this branch of the Kilby family died out in the direct line of descent, and was merged in Alicia Cox and her descendants. "Sons are truly part of a family; daughters go into other "families. Sons are the furniture of your house; daughters are furniture in your house, only "for sale."⁴

¹ Souldern Church register. A son of hers was buried at Souldern, to whose memory there is a tablet in the Parish Church: "Here lies the body of William Reynolds, Gent., son of Alice Reynolds, who departed this life, Feb. y^e 23, 1711, aged 71."

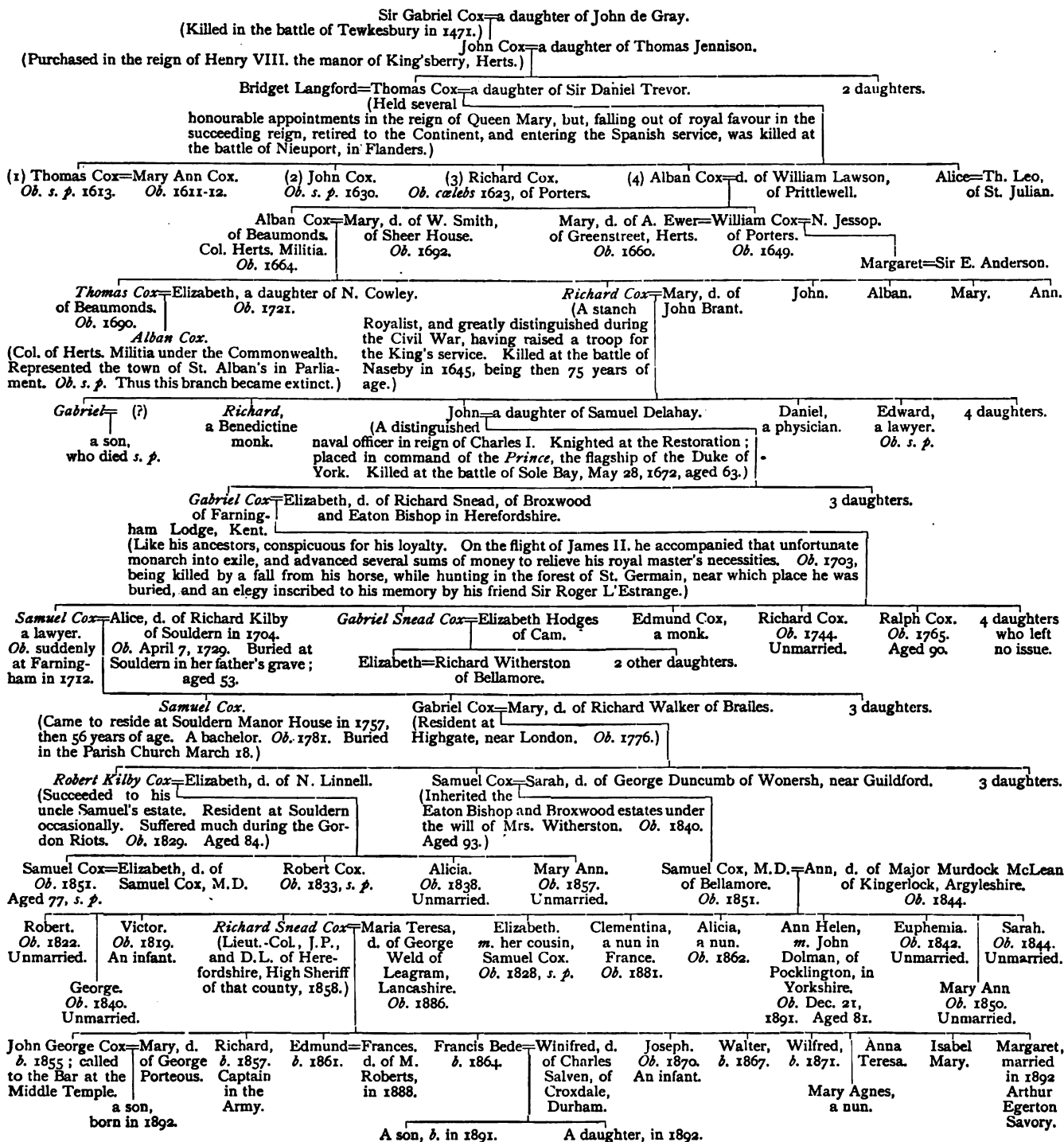
² The English Catholic Registers of 1715, being a Summary of the Register of their Estates, edited by the late Rev. E. Estcourt and John O. Payne.

³ This table was long lost sight of, but was discovered and replaced in 1881 by Mr. Stanton, when resident in the Manor House.

⁴ A saying of James Boswell. See his *Life*, by P. Fitzgerald, vol. II., p. 71 (1891).

PEDIGREE OF COX¹ OF SOULDERN.

Passing over the earlier portions of the descent of this family, we come in the reign of Henry VI. to



¹ Compiled from Clutterbuck's History of Hertfordshire, and memoranda in Col. Cox's possession.

The property which Colonel Cox inherited in 1851 consists of the land which Mr. Snead purchased in 1709 (102a. 1r. 1½ p.), Mr. Richard Kilby having settled a great part of his property on the children of his marriage with Alice Reynolds in 1673. Colonel Cox now resides at Broxwood Court, near Pembridge, in Herefordshire.

Only two members of this family have permanently resided at Souldern. Various tenants have occupied the Manor House in the following order :

I.—Mr. Porter, agent of the Cox and Fermor families.

II.—William Willan, Esq., whose wife dying here in 1805, he shortly left the neighbourhood.

III.—The Comte de Marolles, a French gentleman, who is said to have been related to Bonaparte. He returned to his native country after the peace of 1814.

IV.—Captain Richard Fermor, a younger brother of William Fermor, Esq., of Tusmore. He died at Souldern House in 1817.

V.—James Rousby, Esq., whose son, Edwards Rousby, was born here 1819.

VI.—John Hill, Esq., father of the present Mr. Hill, of Souldern. He lived at the Manor House from 1830 till his death, in May, 1835.

VII.—Mr. John Scott, brother-in-law of the late Mr. Hurlstone, occupied the house until 1846.

VIII.—John Thomas Dolman, Esq., M.D., who had married Anne Helen, fourth daughter of Samuel Cox, M.D., of Eaton Bishop. *Ob.* 1867.

IX.—The Honourable Bryan Stapleton, who had married Dr. Dolman's daughter, from 1867 to 1877.

X.—Frederick Stanton, Esq.

XI.—Colonel England,

Albert Edward, Lieut.-Colonel late Royal Artillery, J.P., Oxon., is the present occupier.

SOULDERN LODGE.

At the sale of the Weedon estate in 1709-10 Mr. Richard Gough, already a landowner resident in Souldern, purchased 126 acres estimated as four yard lands.

The Gough family take their origin from Wales. Several persons of this name were living in the Principality in the reign of Henry I. The name of Owen Glendower's father in the XIVth century, says Pennant, was Griffydd Fychan, and his mother was Elena, of royal blood, the daughter of Thomas-ap-Llewellen-ap-Owen by his wife Elena Gôch or Gough (the red). There was also a celebrated bard named Ido or John Gough.

Arms: Azure, three boars' heads couped.

Crest: Lion demi rampant.

The three boars are assigned to Gough of Wales.

Tunerth or John Goch, al^s Gough of the Principality, living in the time of Henry IV., was father of three sons:

Philip (Sir),
who served in the French
wars of Henry IV., V.,
VI., and received the
honour of knighthood.

Matthew (Sir),
knighted in the
French wars.

Thomas.

Hollingshead says of Sir Matthew :

"For though the Frenchmen got here in this place they went away with little gain from any other, for the bastard de la Baulme, and the lord of Craignar, captains of Courallon with a great band, rode into Masconnois, where Matthew Gough and other Englishmen met and encountered them. There was a sore fight between the parties, being in numbers and courage equal, but after a long conflict the Frenchmen almost all were shot and taken. The Bastard being well-horsed, upon whom followed Matthew Gough (Gôche) chasing him even to his own castle gate, for the which he was much praised by the Earl of Salisbury, to whom he presented the said Bastard, and had not only the rights given him by the prisoner, but a goodly courser at the Earl's hands.

"He, Sir Matthew Gough or Gôche, was a man of excellent virtue and of great renown in the wars of France (under Talbot) in which he served for the space of twenty years and upwards, and ended his life at London Bridge in defending the city against Cade."

Sir Matthew left two sons, *Thomas* (ob. 1437) and *Richard* (ob. 1493, leaving three sons, Thomas, Henry and John).

Henry purchased the lordship and estate of Oldfallings and Perry Hall in Staffordshire. His descendants were among the most zealous adherents of Charles I. One of the other sons, by marriage with one of the co-heirs of William Warren, a descendant of Warine Fitzgerald, lord of the manor of Upper Heyford in this deanery, became possessed of Wilsbury in the hundred of St. Briavel's, Gloucestershire, and other estates of considerable value. Upon the division of this property in the reign of Henry VIII., one branch of the Gough family took the estate at Heyford, and retained it until the reign of George III., when it was sold by R. D. Gough, the then owner.

Mr. Richard Gough, the first of this family who bought land in Souldern, obtained other property in the neighbourhood by his marriage with Anne, the grand-daughter and heiress of William Drope,¹ resident in the adjoining parish of Aynhoe. He was succeeded by his son, Ferdinand Gough.

On a freestone gravestone, in the middle aisle, in capitals :

"Here lyeth the body of Ferdinando Gough, who died the 11th day of November, in the year of our LORD 1664, and is now buried in the chancel. Of Richard Gough, his father, who died about the 20th day of March, in the year of our LORD 1638. Next unto him, near lyeth the body of Anne Gough, his beloved wife, now buried in the grave of Elizabeth Gough, her mother, who dyed the 7th day of May, in the year of our LORD 1664. Both Father and Mother, husband and wife, are gone from hence to an eternal life."

On a stone slab now in the Tower are the following lines to the memory of Ferdinando Gough :

"Friend, here thou seest my body in earth,
 "And how my life is now cut of by death ;
 "But know my soule is now at rest with Him
 "Who from everlasting death did it redeem.
 "T'will not be long before that thou must dye,
 "And then in grave thyself will lye ;

¹ Directly descended from Sir Robert Drope, Knt., Sheriff and Lord Mayor of London in the years 1474-75 (see Stowe's Survey).

There is a pedigree of Thomas Drope, rector of Ardley and Aynhoe, in A. Wood's *Life and Times*, vol. I., p. 285 (Oxford Historical Society).

" Be wise now, therefore, while that thou hast tyme,
 " That grace and CHRIST and glory may be thine.
 " Thyself deceive not with a Christian name,
 " Unless thou also be in heart the same ;
 " Love GOD in truth, believe in CHRIST His Sonne,
 " Bid farewell sin, let vague delight be gone.
 " To be for heaven now, while still thou can,
 " Set on the work, and then, O happy man !"¹

There are many other memorials to members of the Gough family through the two following centuries in Souldern Church :

" Elizabetha (*infans*), March 13th, 1671; Sarah (*virgo*), May 29th, 1684; Richard Gough, "gent., died May 13th, 1717; Sarah, his wife, March 12th, 1755, aged 68. Drope Gough, Esq., "who departed this life 3rd February, 1761; Ann, his wife, who died 5th July, 1793, aged 76. "Also to the memory of Mary, d. of the third Drope Gough and Ann, his wife, widow of "the Rev. Henry Gabell, formerly Rector of Standlake in this county, who died November, "1810, aged 71."

These inscriptions appear upon two united diamond-shaped marble tablets :

" In memory of Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Gough, by Sarah, his wife,² who died 1772, "aged 61." (A portrait of this lady is extant, and her prayer-book is preserved in the family.)

There are also inscriptions on stones in the south aisle to Richard, Francis, and William Gough (dates illegible).

On a slab over the old family pew, "erected by Mrs. Mary Longe as a memorial of her "affection," are the following names :

" Richard Drope Gough, Esq., died May 18th, 1818, aged 63; Ann, his widow, died "December 7th, 1825, aged 69. Mary, their daughter, died March 14th, 1792, aged 10. Harriet, "their daughter, died July 10th, 1803, aged 16. And three of their children, who died in infancy. "Francis Penrose, died November 11th, 1796, aged 52. Sarah, his widow (sister of the above "R. D. Gough), died March 7th, 1814, aged 72."

Immediately under this is a carved marble and stone tablet, to the memory of John Moxon Hill, the only child of John Hill Gough and Anne Penrose, his wife, born June 4th, 1871, fell asleep October 8th, 1875.

And nearer the porch, a tablet to the memory of Sarah Drake (daughter of Francis and Sarah Penrose), who departed this life January 22nd, 1852, aged 74 years, relict of the late Mr. John Drake, of Woburn, Beds.

Other members of the Gough family lie buried on the north side of the church, where there are memorial slabs to Richard Drope Gough, Esq., eldest son of the above R. D. Gough and Ann, his wife, who died July 12th, 1838, aged 58 years; Caroline, his sister, died July, 1836, aged 38; and of Emma Gough (his sister), who died in 1856, aged 67.

On another marble slab is an inscription to the memory of Charles Gough (brother of the above), who died November 3rd, 1863, aged 70; and Sarah (younger daughter of John Hill, of Manchester), his wife, who died December 30th, 1867, aged 67.

And a monument has recently been erected to the memory of Sarah and Louisa, the last

¹ Rawlinson's MS.

² Sarah Eales.

surviving daughters of R. D. Gough (the elder) ; Louisa died January 30th, 1880, aged 82 ; Sarah, January 26th, 1882, in the 88th year of her age.

The present worthy representative of this old county family is J. H. Gough, Esq., barrister-at-law, practising on the Oxford circuit, and occasionally resident at Souldern Lodge. His grandfather and father were coroners for Oxfordshire for many years.

In 1887 he and Mrs. Gough contributed to the Oxfordshire Archæological Society some " Historical and Descriptive Notices of the Parish of Souldern," from which the present writer has, by kind permission, extracted many interesting particulars.

CHANGE OF NAME.

The spelling of names was for a long time vague and unsettled. There was no standard of orthography until the latter part of the XVIIth century. This village long retained in all public documents its original Anglo-Saxon name Sulthorn, with rare and occasional variations of *Suldren*, *Suldron*, *Sulphorne* (*ph* being a misreading for the Anglo-Saxon *th*). In the early part of the XVIIth century the modern name of *Souldern* first appears, and soon afterwards came into general use.

THE INCLOSURE.

This parish was unhappily disturbed by much contention and litigation through the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries. Disputes arose from time to time about the land, the tithes, and the advowson, and the law was continually appealed to for their settlement. Lawsuits are very expensive proceedings, and some of the parishioners were rich enough to indulge in these costly luxuries.

Mr. John Weedon's proposal to inclose his demesne lands first stirred up old grievances about the manorial rights, and at once led to an appeal to the Court of Chancery.

" Edward Love, gent., Thomas Norbury, clerk, Richard Gough, John Dodwell, William Dodwell, John Penn, John Bignell, John Hill, Richard Dodwell, John King, William Bower, George Bower, Robert Wise, John Browne, William Baynard, Simon Bates, William Hodget " were at this time freeholders and inhabitants of the parish. Cadwallader Coker, gent., Richard Clark, Edward Willsay and others " were trustees of a messuage and one yard land in the parish belonging to a charity at Bicester.

These all petitioned the Court of Chancery against John Weedon as to the differences which had arisen between them about the rights of land lying in the open and common fields of the manor. A trial then took place before Sir David Williams, Knt., one of the justices of His Majesty's Bench at Westminster, and one of the judges of Assize of and for the county of Oxon., when it was decided to refer the case " to the judgment of Thomas Chamberlane of Wickham in the said county of Oxon, who undertook the burden of the arbitration." " The said Thomas Chamberlain perceiving " that the said Defendant, being then lord of the manor aforesaid, was purposed rather to drive the " said Complainants to consent to have part of the land purchased as aforesaid laid together, and " divided from the rest of the Complainant's lands in the said common fields of Souldern and, " and also not to suffer them to have any common upon his demesne lands thereof, and to prevent " vexatious and protracted litigation between the Deft and Comp^t the said Thomas Chamberlain " moved, and the said parties agreed to have all their lands measured, divided and enclosed upon

"terms agreed between the parties according to the indifferent judgment of Tho^s Chamberlaine, Bennett Hatton, and Rowland Bull, gents., nominated by the said Thomas Chamberlaine as men of knowledge and understanding of the nature and quality of the grounds, and fields thereof."

The decree for this enclosure was passed in Chancery in Trinity Term on Monday, June 29, 1613, in the tenth year of the reign of James I., and separate allotments of land were immediately set out proportioned to the quantities in the open field previously held by John Weedon, and the other landholders.¹

It was a peculiar provision of this enclosure that "it should be lawful for the parties concerned in it, or any of them, to convey water at his or their charges from other men's grounds to their own with as little damage as possible to the person, from whose land the said water is conveyed; and that such as have used to dry their hay upon Greenlow in right of their meadows near adjoining, when the years fall out so wet that their said meadows are overflowed by water that the grass or hay cannot be dried by reason of the water in the said meadows, leaving sufficient convenient space for the cottagers, to whom Greenlow is allotted, for their beasts to feed and pasture thereon while the hay is so drying."

In consequence of a commutation for tithes agreed upon in this decree, being after some years pronounced faulty and illegal, an appeal was again made to Chancery, when the first decree was set aside, and a second decree, dated June 20, 1676, was substituted, which was ratified and confirmed on the 12th of February following.

Much change and improved cultivation followed the enclosure. "The whole Parish being inclosed, and the much greater part turned to pasturage from arable by reason of the scarcity of grass in many neighbouring parishes, the estates in the said enclosure are much improved as to their yearly value, which improvement in the late years of Warr, when national Taxes became so frequent, contracted a greater charge towards those taxes than formerly, and so continues. It has been much improved since the Inclosure by the planting of St Foin."²

THE CIVIL WAR.

Amid this parochial strife there were sounds of war without. "It is sad," says Macaulay, "to live in times, about which it is amusing to read." This remark, applicable to any record of civil war, is peculiarly so to the English civil war of the XVIIth century. That war instead of being confined to one locality, and to the manœuvres of great regular armies, raged over many counties in a series of desultory operations, conducted generally with more valour than science. Country houses became fortresses and sustained sieges, and in some districts the horrors of war were brought home to almost every village, and every individual. Oxfordshire was one of the counties which suffered most in this way. The dwellers in Souldern first came to feel the outbreak of war by the constant movement of the contending parties through their neighbourhood. In August, 1642, upon the publication of the King's proclamation "for the suppressing of the rebellion under the conduct and command of Robert Earl of Essex," the members of the University of

¹ The original deed of enclosure has been lost. It is said to have been placed in the hands of a lawyer in Bicester, and never to have been returned. A copy of it was in the possession of the late Mr. John Rowland Crook, of Souldern.

² Entries in a book of memoranda in the parish chest.

Oxford began to put themselves in a posture of defence, and chiefly so because a report was prevalent that several companies of soldiers were passing through the country, which had been sent from London by the Parliament to secure for their side the towns of Banbury and Warwick.

On August 28, at about twelve o'clock at night, some of the King's troopers, about 150 or 200 in number, entered Oxford, having come from Brackley, where they had had an encounter with some soldiers of the Parliament.

On September 12, a large company of parliamentary troopers, under the command of Colonel Godwyn and others, came into Oxford from the neighbourhood of Aylesbury, and on the next night another troop of about 200 men arrived by the road from Banbury. Small detachments of the forces of both sides continued to pass through Oxford during the months of September and October.

On Sunday, October 23, the opening battle was fought at Edgehill called Keynton battle, and on the same day in the week following the King came to Oxford with his foot soldiers. "They came "in their full march into the towne; with about 60 or 70 cullours borne before them, which they "had taken in the saide battell of Edgehill from the parliament's forces."¹

In the following year some of the parliamentary troops were quartered at Souldern.

"1643. 19 Chas. I. The king having commenced the siege of Gloucester, the Parliament "determined to make a great effort for the relief of that city. They despatched the Earl of Essex, "then General in Chief, who appointed Brackley heath for the rendezvous of his army. Here he "waited a reinforcement of the trained bands or militia, and other auxiliaries which arrived on the "1st of September. It was a goodly sight to see the whole army of horse and foot together, and "it is conceived by those, that viewed our army well, that wee did consist of (to speak the least) "15,000 horse and foot, and some speak of many more. From hence we marched this day to a "village called Souldern 4 miles from Banbury, where our six regiments that came from London "were quartered; and my Lord Generall, and the rest of the army were quartered about a mile "from us at a market town called Ano on the hill. We were very much stinted of victuals in this "place."²

The King still keeping his headquarters at Oxford, men, arms, and provisions of all kinds were demanded from the villages around far and near. Fritwell and Souldern received "an order "to send horses and carts to Oxford for the king."

"March 27, 1644. William Burroughs reports that the King (as hee heares) is still in "Oxford, and the carts wh. were warnd from Soulderne and Fritwell are not as yett gone in, but "it is dayly expected when his majesty and his forces shall march out, and it is generally reported "at Banbury, Buckingham and other places that they intend to beseidge Newport and Northampton "both together."³

These were dark days, when the residents in this village were exposed to the violence and incivilities of Cromwell's soldiers. The country was suffering greatly from increased taxation, and in all directions was swept by forage parties carrying away cattle, money and other valuables; but when in addition to this the houses of any place were taken possession of, and occupied for some days by large numbers of soldiers, the trials and sufferings of the inhabitants must have been very sad. Still, in spite of the disturbed state of the country, wages appear to have remained much at the level at which they had stood before the war, that is to say at 7*d.* a day, with a tendency to

¹ Anthony Wood's *Life and Times*, vol. I. (Oxford Hist. Soc.).

² King's Pamphlets in British Museum.

³ MS. Letter Book of Sir Samuel Luke, quoted in Beesley's *History of Banbury*, p. 402.

rise to 8*d.*, this sum being supplemented by the profits of the domestic labour of wives and daughters, by pasturage on commons, and by fowling on moor and fen.¹

There is no direct evidence of the state of Church matters in this parish during the intrusion of a Presbyterian minister from 1647 to the Restoration; but there is no reason to suppose that this was much better here than elsewhere.² Numbers probably flocked to hear the extempore prayers and long sermons which then for a while became common, while the sacraments and other ordinances of the Church were sadly neglected. In a letter of Lady Verney's, dated London, March 11, 1647, to Sir R. Verney of Claydon, in this neighbourhood, she describes the general state of Church services. Speaking of the christening of her child, she says: "I will get a minister in the house that will do it the old way; for 'tis not the fashion here to have godfathers or godmothers, but for the father to bring the child to Church, and to answer for it. My dear heart, to tell thee how barbarous a place this is, would take up more room than this paper; but truly one lives like a heathen in it. Since I have recovered my health, I have gone to our parish Church, but could never but one time get any room there for all the money I offered; and either I must be at the charge to hire a coach to try all the churches, or else sit at home; and when one gets room one hears a very strange kind of service, and in such a tone that most people do nothing but laugh at it; and every body that receives must be examined before by the elders, who they all swear asketh them such questions that would make one blush to relate."³

Puritan fanatics at this time destroyed the three crosses, which for four centuries and more had been among the outward emblems of Christianity in this village; broke the painted windows of the Parish Church, and bedaubed with whitewash the columns and walls, which the worshippers of olden time had loved to adorn with various designs of Christian art.

PROTESTANTISM.

It is often stated that the great rebellion of 1642 was a popular movement, the resistance of a nation against what was thought to be illegal taxation. But this was not so, for had it been only this the Cavaliers would have won the day. The English people had long been used to personal government, and if Charles had only governed like Elizabeth he would have had nothing to fear from them. Elizabeth was regarded by her subjects as the great bulwark of Protestantism. Could Charles have caused himself to be regarded in the same light he could have done what he pleased.⁴ "If Charles Ist," says Lord Beaconsfield, "had hanged every Roman Catholic in his dominions, his descendants might have been sitting on the throne of England." The dominant public feeling of the day was without doubt an intense horror of everything approaching to Popery, and it was Cromwell's device to utilize this unbending fanaticism of the fierce Protestant sectaries in aid of the proceedings of the parliamentary leaders. The popular Protestantism was not lacking here. It is evidenced in John Dodwell's bequests in 1694, wherein he excludes Romanists from benefiting by his gifts. But this appears yet more plainly from the collections made under

¹ Gardiner's History of the Civil War.

² See History of Somerton, p. 140.

³ Memoirs of the Verney family during the Civil War, vol. II., quoted in Gardiner's History, vol. III., chap. XLVI.

⁴ Dr. Arnold asserts this in one of his lectures on Modern History.

Briefs. A careful account of these has been recorded in the Church Registers for a century (1668 to 1771), and from these it appears that while small sums of money, varying from 1s. to 5s. were generally given for the restoration of churches, losses by fire, sufferers from shipwreck, the greatest sympathy was called forth (1) for the redemption of slaves, and (2) for the relief of French and Irish Protestants.

			£	s.	d.
1678.	Dec. 30.	For y ^e redemption of y ^e slaves in Africa ...	12	11	
1680.	Aug st 8.	Algiers slaves	15	4	
1681.	Feb. 16.	For y ^e distressed Protestants of France ...	10	3	
1686.	May 2.	French Protestants	3	3	11½
1689.	July 2, 3, 4.	Relief of y ^e Irish Protestants	3	10	10
1690.	May 8.	2 nd Irish brief for the same	9	10	
1694.	July 23.	French Protestants relief	1	15	7
1700.	Aug. 8.	Slaves at Machanes	15	9	
1715.		For the reformed Episcopal Churches in Polish Prussia	4	6	

No further entries of this kind appear after the last-mentioned year.

THE BUTTS.

The daily life of the villagers was passed in the round of their ordinary occupations, but there were occasions when the circle was broken. All the adult males were trained in the use of the bow. By an ordinance of the fifth year of Edward IVth's reign (1466), it was required that "Butts should be made in every township, at which the inhabitants were to shoot up and down "upon all Feast days under the penalty of a half penny for every time any one of them neglected "to perform this exercise." The butts of this village probably occupied the ground, which in more peaceful times was diverted into a Bowling green, of which traces yet remain on the side of the road leading to and from the village. The rifle has now taken the place of the bow, and the volunteers of to-day are the lineal descendants of the soldier citizens who 400 years ago began regular training to become good marksmen.

A COMET.

Science is at a loss concerning comets. We have very little knowledge of their nature or purpose. They move in strange and eccentric orbits. They burst upon us suddenly, and as suddenly disappear. Whether they affect us at all, or to what extent they do so, is a matter of debate. Certainly, however, in former times, if not now, they caused fear and restlessness among multitudes of people.

"Dec. 12. 1664. Mighty talk there is of this Comet that is seen a night's, and the King "and Queene did sit up last night to see it, and did it seems.

"Dec. 24. I saw the Comet, which now, whether worn away or no I know not, appears not "with a tail but only is longer and fuller than any other star and is come to rise betimes, and to "make a great arch and is gone quite to a new place in the heavens than it was before but I hope in "a clearer night something more will be seen.¹

"1664. A blazing starr, which appeared in England from the beginning of Dec. to the

¹ Pepys' Diary. See History of Mixbury, p. 26.

"latter end of January (see Colly's Almanac, 1666) prodigious births, as particularly that at Sarum
 "—the devill let loose to possess people as at Soulderne in Mr Kilbie's maid ; at Barchamstede
 "beyond Ailbury ; at Mr John Mumpesson's of Tedworth in Wiltshire ; one Mr John Viccaridg his
 "child (a wench) of 11 years old within a mile of Tewksbury strangely possest—great inundations
 "and frosts—war with the Dutch—war between the Emperour and the Turk, general commotions
 "throughout Christendom, and the rest of the world—sudden deaths and particularly at Oxon."¹

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS.

National mercies were more accounted of by our forefathers than they are by us of a later generation. In days of general peril and unsettlement most persons look beyond the immediate circle of their homes and families and friends, and feel an interest in national, as well as in their own private and personal prospects. Great national mercies are the theme of most of the inspired hymns and psalms of the Jews, and thanksgivings for these are still a solemn duty. Thus November 5, 1604, was long held in remembrance. The service appointed for the day was said in the Parish Church, and the bells rang out merry peals. Payments to the ringers appear nearly every year in the churchwardens' accounts, and even in a day of paring down parochial expenses a diminished sum was allowed for the commemoration of this old custom.

"1707. Memorand. It is agreed that there shall be no more money spent upon the Town's
 "account, unless it be upon Gunpowder Trason, and then but one shilling."

From 1774 to 1828 more liberal payments were made.

"Paid the Fifth of November 5^s," varied occasionally by "Paid for Beer the 5th of November
 "2^s 6^d," or "Paid the Ringers the 5th of November 5^s."

On May 29, 1660, the monarchy was restored, and this anniversary has been observed to the present time. The day is known as "Oak Apple Day," when a branch of an oak-tree is displayed in the principal street, and oak apples are extensively worn.

BURYING IN WOOLLEN.²

The first record of a burial under the Act for burying in woollen passed in 1667, was made a few years after the passing of the Act.

"Sept. 19, 1678. Elizabeth Broreget ; an affidavit and certificate from Sr Thomas
 "Chamberlain, Justice of peace y^t y^e fores' Elizabeth was buryed according to y^e Act, w^{ch} affidavit
 "was made before Sr Thomas Chamberlain y^e s^d 19th of September, and delivered to y^e minister
 "and by him Registered y^e 29th of y^e s^d September, 1678."

Similar entries in the Church Registers are continued through a century, the last on March 24, 1777, with few exceptions, chiefly between 1725 and 1730. But the custom was regarded with dislike, and there were occasional breaches of the law.

"Carolus King, advena sepul. Julii 27, 1679.

"To John Dodwell Sen^r or Mr Gough, Churchwardens of Souldern Oxon, or either of them.

"Aug. 11, 1679. These are to inform you y^t one Charles King (as his name is told mee) a
 "stranger, was buryed on July 27 last past concerning w^m I have not a Certificate according to y^e
 "Act of Parl^{mt}."

¹ A. Wood's Life and Times, vol. II., p. 53 (Oxford Historical Society).

² See History of Hethe, p. 36 ; of Upper Heyford, pp. 40-43.

" Or in their absence to Tho: Dodwell Overseer of y^e poor in y^e s^d Parish.

" This certificate was deliver^d to Tho. Dodwell Overseer by Mary Whiting.

" Sarah Gough, virgo sepult Maii 29, 1684.

" Mem. No affidavit brought in the 6th June to John Dodwell, Churchwarden, Souldern, or
" any shown to M^r King.

" This certificate is to inform y^t no affidavit has been brought to mee within y^e time limited
" by y^e Act of Parliament for burying in woollen concerning M^{rs} Sarah Gough being interred accord-
" ing to y^e directions thereof. Witness my hand this 7th of June 1684.

" B. T. (BRYAN TURNER), Rector."

POLITICS.

Political agitators arise in a country from time to time. Such were the Anabaptists of the XVIth century. They professed many strange religious opinions, chiefly a denial of baptismal grace, requiring persons baptized in infancy to be baptized anew, but the real charge against them was that, to use a modern term, they were Socialists. In Holland they were hurried by their enthusiasm into acts of violence, tumult and sedition, and after their arrival in this country they created a great deal of disturbance among the humbler classes of society. Some of this sect were resident in this village at the close of the XVIIth century.

" Elisha King Oxoniensis filius Anabaptista, annos natus 25, obnixe sacrum lavacrum petijt,
" & humiliter accepit, Apr^l 10, 1694.

" Elizabetha Haley—filia Anabaptistæ annos nata 18, Nov. 25, 1696."

Political questions were not much considered in villages, until quite recent times, but on special occasions they excited attention. The residents in Souldern were loyal to the powers that be, duly celebrating from year to year the reigning monarch's birthday, through the reign of George I.

" Given to the ringers on his majesty King George his birthday 28 day of May, 2^s 6^d.

" P^d the ringers of King George's Coronation 2^s 6^d.

" 1728. For drawing the king's carridges £2."

But in the famous county election of 1754 they declared themselves decidedly inclined to the Stuart restoration. In that election the question lay between the Tories, who were high Churchmen and, if they did not support, yet certainly favoured the cause of the Pretender, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, called the " Old Interest," and the Whigs, who supported the reigning king and the Hanoverian party, called the " New Interest," when all the voters in this parish plumped for Lord Wenman and Sir James Dashwood, the Tory candidates.

The names of these voters were William Bates, Robert Bignell, Thomas Bignell, James Gibbs, Drope Gough, John Hill, William Hill, Edward Hyett, John Jeffs, John Robbins, John Russell (rector), Ferdinando Southam, John Westcar, Thomas Westcar.

This election was attended with much rioting, and the Souldern constable was summoned to assist in keeping the peace. He entered in his accounts :

" 1754, July y^e 5. Paid John Bates for blaking a fork stale for a staf, when I atended at the
" Election at Oxford, 8^d."

THE PARISH VESTRY.

The village Moot, or gathering of the town's-folk to transact public business, was at first, like the Hundred Moot, held at some mound or central spot, and the practice, common in many places not long ago, of the farmers gathering for conference outside the Parish Church before divine service preserved a memory of the free, open-air life of the Moot before it became merged in the parish vestry. The vestry in this parish was generally held in Easter week, when the parish officers were elected and their accounts audited. In the last century it was attended by a large number of the inhabitants, and had degenerated into a meeting of a social and convivial character. For many years it was held in the village inn, the host being the village doctor,¹ who, no doubt, contrary to modern practice, was not slow to advise the use of stimulants. Entries like the following occur yearly in the accounts of the Overseers and Constables :

" Spent when he gave up the accounts	10 ^s	6 ^d
" Spent when y ^e neighbours gave up y ^e accounts	12 ^s	
" Pd at Doctor Chenills when y ^e neighbours met about } " settling y ^e tax	3 ^s	4 ^d
" Pd Chenills at Easter for ale, a making up the accounts ...	8 ^s	
" Pd for beer that was drunk at y ^e meeting	4 ^s	6 ^d
" Pd Do.	13 ^s	
" 1731. Pd at the given up the accounts ffor Ale	16 ^s	
" —38. Pd when we met at Easter	15 ^s	6 ^d
" —76. Spent at the Town Meeting	11 ^s	
" —78. Spent at Easter meeting	10 ^s	6 ^d
" —79. (Same)	13 ^s	
" —83. Spent at the meeting	12 ^s	1 ^d

No public business was transacted without a copious consumption of beer at the cost of the ratepayers :

" 1731. At Tho ^s Partington's funeral Doctor Chennels for ale	3 ^s	
" Pd for Ale at y ^e seling of Tho ^s Parkington's goods to } " Doctor Chennels	6 ^s	6 ^d
" 1732. Spent at y ^e selling of Fletcher's goods	9 ^s	
" — Spent at Chennell's when we went after the goods } " as bent sold	3 ^s	9 ^d
" 1734.		
" April y ^e 7. Spent at y ^e Doctor Chennels	2 ^s	6 ^d
" — y ^e 9. Spent at y ^e Doctor Chennels when you set } " Martin to Jeffs	5 ^s	6 ^d
" May 19. Spent at y ^e Doctor Chennels, when you delivered } " y ^e bond to M ^r Michal	5 ^s	6 ^d
" Oct. y ^e 22. Pd for ale at Chennelles, when we received the } " money of M ^r Hollyar	19 ^s	4 ^d

¹ 1731. Paid Doctor Chennels for curon Goody Tims' leg, 5^s. Paid Doctor Chenels for curing Martin harriss "of the Itch" (Overseer's Accounts, 1734).

"Oct. y ^e 27. P ^d for ale at Chennelles when we bound	}	11 ^s
"Martin, and paid y ^e money to M ^r Jeffs		
"Dec. 16. Paid Margret Chenel for ale with Great Tew	}	1 ^s 6 ^d
"offering		
" — 23. P ^d Margret Chenels for Deborah Taylor and	}	12 ^s 6 ^d
"the Towns men meeting a bought her		
"settlement		
"1735. Nov. y ^e 4. Spent at Chenels when the neighbours	}	6 ^s
"was abought Doctor Pearson's		
"money		
— the 5. Spent at Chenels when Mr. Bower	}	3 ^s
"right the leter too send too the		
"Doctor's trustee		
"Nov. 17. Spent when M ^r Warker paid the money to the	}	10 ^s
"Over-Sear, which was due from Doc. Pearson ...		
"1752. P ^d John Horn for Bear when y ^e Labors was amend-	}	8 ^s 6 ^d
"ing the Hiways, and digen of stones		
"Bear when y ^e Labors was adigin of stones		6 ^s 6 ^d "

Beer was sold at this time at 2d. per pint. The quantity therefore consumed at these meetings frequently amounted to eight or eleven gallons, and on one occasion to fourteen gallons more or less.

These beer-drinking customs long continued, even to the present century. None of the rectors attended these parish meetings until the year 1781, when the signature of J. Horseman first appears among those auditing and approving the accounts.

THE CONSTABLE.

A petty constable was elected yearly, and frequently from the chief parishioners. He held office for a year, at the end of which he rendered his accounts. The first constable whose name has come down to us was appointed during the Commonwealth:

"At the Court Leet held at Soulderne, 1652, at the Manor House of John Weedon, John "Dodwell is chosen constable in the place of Robert Bignell."

At the same time, among the jurors for the keepers of the liberties of England, by authority of Parliament, and also for the above-named lord of the said manor, are named John Dodwell (the younger), Thomas Dodwell, John Dodwell, William Dodwell, and Ferdinando Gough.

The accounts of the Souldern constable through eighty-eight years (1717-1805) have been preserved, and are written in a long book of paper pages with parchment cover. The parishioners were careful about the passing of this book from one constable to another:

"April y^e 4th, 1738. It is agreed by us whose Names are hereunto subscribed that if any "Officer since the date first above mentioned shall cut tear out, or suffer to be cut or tore out of this "Book any Leafe or Leafs any time of his or their office, shall forfeit the sum of two and sixpence "for every default to be paid att the Giving up of their accompts at a General meeting of the "town's People.

"George Gough, James A Ariss his mark, Thomas Parish, Dodwell Colgrove, William hill,

"James french, Giles Ibell, The mark of Tho^s V Young, The mark of John X Robins, Rob^t Bignell, "John Bowers."

This book of accounts throws much light on the manners and morals of the village during the last century. Two or three times in a year, and occasionally oftener, some wrong was done to person or property. The constable then raised "a hue and cry," sometimes in the night and in the adjoining village of Fritwell, for which he received a payment of 4d. This was effected by the loud blowing of a horn, or some other noisy outcry, and was intended to give public notice of a wrong done, and to enlist the assistance of all who heard it in pursuing and capturing the offender. If the latter was taken, the constable placed him or her in the stocks until he could obtain a warrant to bring such before a magistrate. Occasionally he was obliged to call for assistance :

" 1766. March 31 st . For a woman that was troublesome	}	1 ^s
"and roof (rough)		
" 1767. Sept. 16. P ^d Master Williams a Bill of largise for	}	£2 18 ^s 6 ^d
"going to Lilehour and taking Antony Jaycock ...		
" Ditto Expenses at Bourton and gards that night		8 ^s 9 ^d
" Ditto for going to Bicester to Justice with Antony Jacock ...		4 ^s 6 ^d
" 1791. Sept 5. For taking a man, and putting him in the	}	4 ^s "
"Stocks and a gard		

The Feast had now degenerated into a noisy and often riotous meeting, increased by numbers of disorderly persons who flocked in from the neighbouring villages. It became therefore necessary to appoint two other men to assist the constable in keeping the peace during the two first days of its continuance :

" 1718. Sept. 9. Paid for whicheing (watching) too nights	}	2 ^s
"att y ^e wake		
" 1721. For wathing Sundy nite, and Mundy nite		2 ^s
" 1731. P ^d balis and warner for wattching att y ^e wacke ...		1 ^s "

In 1726 a robbery was committed, for which the parish had to pay damages :

" Sept. 28. P^d for a Robery 8^s.

" 1730. P^d to the High Constable for y^e robery money, 10^s. 11^d.

" 1731. P^d the Robery money £2. 5^s. 6^d."

A payment was made yearly called "Marshalsea money." The Marshalsea was the court or seat of the Marshal of the King's houses. It was created in 1552 (33 Hen. VIII), with jurisdiction to try murders and other offences where blood was shed in the King's palace or any other royal household. This name was given to the King's palace in Southwark,¹ and, for the relief of the prisoners there, it was enacted in Queen Elizabeth's reign that the justices of the peace should fix such competent sums of money, to be paid quarterly out of every county, so that there be sent out of every county 20s. yearly at the least to each of the prisons of the King's Bench and Marshalsea. The sum first mentioned as payable from this parish was 19s. 8d. :

¹ "Whoever goes into Marshalsea Place, turning out of Angel
"Court leading to Bermondsey, will find his feet on the very
"paving-stones of the extinct Marshalsea Jail; will see its narrow
"yard to the right and to the left, very little altered, if at all,

"except that the walls were lowered when the place got free;
"will look upon the rooms in which the debtors lived; and will
"stand among the crowding ghosts of many miserable years"
(Dickens' Little Dorrit, Preface).

"To the King's Bench and Marshall and hous of correction; }
 "half a year } 9^s 4^d
 "Our goin to bister and charges for carrin it 1^s 6^d
 "Pd to the Chief Constable for the marsal money 14^s 9^d"

Similar entries occur in the accounts of every year, but greatly varying in amount :

		£	s.	d.
" 1770. June 6.	Pd three years pay to the Kings' Bench	}	1	5
	" of Marshallsea money			
" Feb. 12.	The same entry.			
" 1785. June 20.	Paid eight years Marshal money		3	6 8
	" Expenses at the time			2
" Sept. 8	} same entry.			
" Dec. 28				
" March 25				
" 1793. June 21.	Paid four years Marshall money		1	13 4
" Sept. 28	} same entry."			
" Dec. 26				
" March 18				

Hence it appears that the tax was irregularly paid, and was frequently in long arrears.¹

It was the business of the constable to look after the stocks, and the whipping-post, and the pound, and to keep these in repair; to take journeys to the meetings of the magistrates in Bicester, to pay the Marshalsea money, to take in the lists of freeholders, of men qualified to serve on juries, of men picked for the militia, to pay the window tax, to render an account of assessments for the Land Tax, and such other business, he receiving a payment of 2s. for each journey.

The constable was also the appointed officer for the relief of vagrants. By an Act of Parliament (27 Hen. VIII.) it was enacted that all beggars and vagrants should repair to the place of their birth, or where they had last dwelt for three years, and that they should be provided with a form in writing called a pass, which they were to surrender to the constables of the parishes through which they travelled homewards, at the end of every ten miles, who were to provide them with meat and drink for one meal and lodging for one night only.

Beggars were to be branded with a mark, and then whipped, and any constable neglecting this duty was liable to a penalty of ten shillings. This village lying between towns, was much pestered with these two classes, and scarcely a week passed without some relief being given to them by the constable or the overseers. The most constant recipients were soldiers in companies from two to ten; travellers with passes; men and women professing sickness or losses or distress of some kind, and Turkish slaves.² The occasional births and baptisms of their children evidence the presence of vagrants in considerable numbers.

¹ The separate rate for prisoners was merged in the general County rate by an act of Parliament, 12 Geo. II., until 53 Geo. III., c. 113, when the county of Oxford was exempted from contributing to the Marshalsea, but had to levy an annual rate of £10 for the King's Bench Prison, and £5 for the Fleet Prison. The Marshalsea with the other prisons for the reception of these special criminals and debtors were abolished, and consolidated in the Queen's Prison by 5 and 6 Victoria, c. 22.

² " 1722, April. Paid to a seven Turkes slaves, 1^s.

" Pd to two Turkish slaves, 6^d.

" 1726. Given to a man that was taken by the Turks, 6^d.

" 1731. Gave 3 men as was take by the Turks, 1^s.

" 1732. Gave 7 men that came out of Turkey, 6^d."

See History of Somerton, p. 136.

- " 1677. Isabell, filia Ralph Reeve peregrini bapt. Oct. 12.
 " 1693. Maria Bolt, filia Edw. Bolt and Sarah uxoris. mendicatum itinerantium Dec. 24.
 " 1699. Johannes Rowe filius Johannis et Saræ uxoris ejus mendicatum itinerantium bapt.
 " Martii 10.
 " 1703. Maria Smith filia Gulielmi Smith et Mariæ uxoris mendicatum itinerantium bapt
 " Julii 25."
 It was often rough accommodation that was afforded them :
 " 1725. Charge of a woman and a boy lying in my barn all night, 4^d.
 " 1744. My expense for a travel woman that lay in in my stable, 16^s 6^d.
 " 1748. Gave a pore woman that was took ill to send her out of the parish 1^s 6^d.
 " Which lay all night for Bear and a woman to atend her out of y^e Parish, 1^s."

THE OVERSEERS OF THE POOR.

The condition of the agricultural labourer was much improved during the first half of the XVIIIth century. In the previous century his daily wage had been 10^d., while the average price of corn had been 38s. 2d. per quarter. During the first sixty years of the XVIIIth century his average wage was 1s., the price of corn being 32s. Thus while the price of corn had owing to a succession of good seasons fallen 16 per cent., wages had risen to about an equal extent, and the labourer was the most benefited. The middle of the last century was about his best time, but a decline soon set in, which was no doubt attributable to the bad administration of the poor laws, and of the premium they put on early marriages.

The accounts of the overseers of this parish are extant from 1728 to 1790. Through the first two years of this period they record weekly payments varying from 6d. to 3s., to seven poor persons, chiefly widows; in 1730 the latter increased to eight; and from the middle of the last century the payments were extended to greater numbers, and included gifts of clothing to children and payments in augmentation of the labourers' wages. The following tables show the increase of the poor rate during the last century.

<i>Names of Overseers.</i>		<i>Years.</i>			<i>Money expended.</i>		
					£	s.	d.
Dodwell Colgrave	...	1728	...	...	29	4	10
James Aris	...	1729	...	...	13	13	5
Thomas Parish	...	1730	...	...	44	11	4
John Robins	...	1731	...	...	35	10	6
Giles Ibell	...	1732	...	...	31	16	7
Same	...	1733	...	...	38	12	11
James Ariss	...	1734	...	...	23	9	9
Robert Bignel	...	1736	...	...	15	4	0
Giles Ibell	...	1737	...	...	16	14	8
Same	...	1738	...	...	24	6	4
William Hill	...	1739	...	...	11	13	0
Same	...	1740	...	...	12	15	0
James Ariss	...	1741	...	...	20	2	10
John Smith	...	1742	...	...	27	4	11
Mr Westcar	...	1743	...	...	20	5	3

<i>Names of Overseers.</i>	<i>Years.</i>	<i>Money expended.</i>		
		£	s.	d.
Giles Ibell	1744	25	5	9½
James Gibbs	1745	17	8	8
Same	1746	15	19	5
James Ariss	1747	19	15	6
Mr Gibbs	1748	23	0	6
Thomas Westcar	1749	35	15	0
Same	1750	35	15	7
Robert Bignell	1751	41	6	8
William Hill	1752	36	12	11
John Smyth	1753	35	15	10½
Same	1754	47	18	5½
Samuel Sturch	1755	63	0	10
William Minn	1756	69	8	2
Same	1757	66	8	0
Robert Bignell	1758	84	5	8
Thomas Weston	1775	107	13	2½
Richard Bolt				
William Smith	1778	107	18	3
William Minn				
Thomas Westcar	1779	109	19	6
John Merry				
John Austin	1780	123	17	1
Richard Crick				
Mr Gough	1781	106	16	6
John East				
Mr William Hill	1782	114	17	6
Mr William Minn				
Mr William Minn	1783	136	5	0
Mr John East				
Mr William Smith	1784	115	12	6
Thomas Westcar	1785	158	0	6
John Austin	1786	154	17	4
John East				
A. D. Gough	1787	207	16	11¾
W. Smith				
William Minn	1788	241	0	10½
Samuel Westcar				
Rev ^d Mr Horseman	1789	242	2	11½
Esther Dolley				
John East	1790	313	11	3
John Foster				

The money raised by Poor and other rates in the year ending Easter, 1803, amounted to £425 5s., at 1s. 10d. in the pound.¹

A marked increase in this rate will be observed in the year 1775. The accounts for seventeen years from 1758 to 1775 are missing, and in that interval the plan of supplementing the labourer's wages from the poor rate first came into use. A man out of work was employed by the ratepayers in turn, being passed on from one to another, and if his weekly wage fell short of the usual rate, the deficiency was made up to him from the public poor rate. The first payment of men "on their rounds"² is mentioned in

"1775. July 16. Rich^d Lake 6 days' rounds, 2s."

This entry occurs regularly for several weeks. In November of the same year another roundsman was put upon the rates.

"Nov. 19. P^d John Grace 10 days at East's, M^r Hills and M^r Smiths, 5s."

In 1790 the roundsmen numbered sixteen, each receiving weekly payments varying from 1s. to 5s.

One of the ways by which the poor gained settlements in parishes was by commorancy, *i.e.*, by continuing to reside in some other place than that in which they were before legally settled. Living as a hired servant for a year, being unmarried, and serving, or being bound, as an apprentice in a parish made a legal settlement, so that a person being settled by such means, and not having acquired a settlement elsewhere, if he fell into poverty, was entitled to relief from the parish, where he last gained such settlement, and where he was settled his family were obliged to follow him. Hence arose the following agreement, dated April 19, 1802 :

"To all to whom these presents shall come, We whose names are hereunto subscribed, and
 "seals affixed, inhabitants of the parish of Souldern in the county of Oxford send greeting, Whereas
 "the number of poor in the said parish of Souldern is become burthensome, and expensive, and it is
 "apprehended that one great cause of such burthen and expense is owing to the hiring of men
 "servants into the said parish by the year (the same being much discontinued in other parishes and
 "places) whereby such servants acquire their settlements in the said parish of Souldern, and not
 "elsewhere, and continue and abide in the said parish with their families ; And in order to prevent
 "in future as much as may be the evil attendant thereon, it has been agreed by and between us the
 "said inhabitants as hereafter is mentioned, Now Know ye Therefore that we the said inhabitants
 "whose names are hereto as aforesaid set, and seals affixed, Have covenanted, consented, and
 "agreed, And by these presents Do covenant consent and agree to and with each other, and to and
 "with the Heirs, Executors and Administrators of each other That we the said inhabitants or
 "either of us shall not or will not at any time hereafter retain hire or employ any male servant or
 "servants (excepting such only as are already legally settled in the said parish) as a yearly hired
 "servant or servants, or in any other manner or form so or in such wise as that such person or
 "persons shall or may by reason of such hiring and service acquire a legal settlement or settlements
 "in the said parish, And if we or either of us shall so retain or employ such servant or servants
 "who shall in virtue or consequence thereof acquire a legal settlement or settlements in the said
 "parish of Souldern, such of us so offending and breaking this present contract and agreement, his
 "her or their Executors or Administrators respectively shall and will forfeit and pay to the others

¹ A. Young's Report to the Board of Agriculture.

² See History of Bicester, pp. 48-50.

“or other of us signing for the same for every male servant or servants so brought and legally
 “settled in the said parish the full sum of Twenty pounds of lawful money of Great Britain to be
 “paid and delivered over to the Overseer or Overseers of the same parish for the time being and
 “carried to account, and employed towards the maintenance of the Poor there, any usage or custom
 “to the contrary notwithstanding.

“In witness whereof We the said inhabitants have hereunto set our hands and seals this
 “nineteenth day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand, eight hundred and two.

“ John Horseman,	Robert Rogers,
“ R ^d D. Gough,	R ^d Scott,
“ William Minn,	E. Westcar,
“ William Smith,	James Minn,
“ Henry Bolt,	John Merry,
“ John East,	John East Jun ^r ,
“ John Austin,	Richard Smith,
“ Samson Boddington,	George Swetman,
“ Richard Humphreys	Hen ^y Essery,
“ William Rogers.”	

There is mention of a bird-catcher (first mentioned in 1677—“P^d the bird-catcher 3^s. 2^d.”) whose business it was to destroy the sparrows and other birds which were thought to do injury to the growing crops. Though no further mention is made of this parish officer, the custom of sparrow-killing was continued until the middle of the present century. The boys of the village, or any other person who pleased, destroyed every year as many birds as they could, and brought them to the churchwardens, who paid for them at the rate of 2d. per dozen, and after 1803 3d. per dozen. The period of greatest slaughter was in the second quarter of the present century, when from forty to ninety dozen were killed yearly. A great attack on moles—and it is the only one mentioned—was made in 1835 :

“ P^d for catching moles £3 3^s.”

SOULDERN GATE.

The public highways within this parish measure 6 miles 4 furlongs. A great help to locomotion was made in 1793, when a turnpike road was formed from Bicester to Aynhoe. By this easy access was given to the towns on either side, Bicester and Banbury. Two gates were placed at the point where the road to and from the village joined it, one across each road, and here travellers had to pay a toll, which freed them from further payment at the Bicester and Adderbury gates. “Souldern Gate” is now gone, but it has a name among hunting annals, for it has figured for many years, and figures still, in the appointments for the meets of the Bicester foxhounds.

OLD CUSTOMS.

The old holidays of mediæval times are still celebrated, though not as of old. The old mummers are nowadays represented by carol-singers and rude players who go round from house to house for more than a week before every Christmas Day. On May Day groups of children, dressed in their best clothes and carrying garlands of flowers, go about singing :

"Gentlemen and Ladies,
 "We wish you happy May;
 "We come to show our May garland,
 "Because it is May-day.

Chorus—"Because it is May-day, etc.

"A branch of May we bring to you,
 "And at your door it stands;
 "It is but a sprig, but it prospers a bough,
 "The work of our own hands.

Chorus—"Gentlemen and Ladies, etc."

The village Feast still remains the chief holiday of the year. Open house is kept; plum-puddings and roast beef are prepared by all, who can afford them, and the poorest cottage has its cake and bottle of home-made wine. Relations and friends from all parts come to visit their old homes.

POPULATION.

The earliest Church Registers of this parish shared the fate of many others during the troubled period of Oliver Cromwell's usurpation. The existing ones commence a few years after the Restoration, in the year following Mr. Bryan Turner's institution to this Rectory. On the first page of a parchment book he wrote, "Registrum de Soldern in Comite Oxoniensi" "ab anno Dñi 1667." He divided the book into three parts:

"*Baptizati*" (the first entry bearing date June 28, 1668).

"*Sepulti*" (first entry Sept. 14, 1669).

"*Nuptiæ*" (first entry Feb. 21, 1668).

In the XVIIth Century.

<i>Decades of Years.</i>		<i>Baptisms.</i>		<i>Marriages.</i>		<i>Burials.</i>
1670—79	...	47	...	2	...	30
1680—89	...	51	...	...	...	37
1690—99	...	49	...	3	...	42

In the XVIIIth Century.

1700—09	...	45	...	15	...	45
1710—19	...	66	...	5	...	47
1720—29	...	53	...	7	...	53
1730—39	...	51	...	8	...	35
(One year, 1735, missing.)						
1740—49	...	67	...	...	...	36
1750—59	...	81	...	...	...	63
1760—69	...	82	...	...	...	70
1770—79	...	88	...	...	...	52
1780—89	...	84	...	...	...	50
1790—99	...	90	...	...	...	38

The growth of the population was rapid in the XVIIIth century. Before 1751 the largest decennial increase was 3 per cent. In each of the next three decennial periods the increase was 6 per cent.; between 1781-91, 9 per cent.; and between 1791-1800, 11 per cent. A steadily-declining mortality is also apparent towards the close of the century. In the first and third decades the deaths equalled the births. There were occasional outbreaks of small-pox, and in the middle of the century it was prevalent:

" 1730. Gave a poor man that had the small pox 8^d.

" 1748. P^d when W^m Robins was carried to Grindon that had y^e small pox 9^s. 2^d.

" 1749. P^d W^m Bennett for Simons lodging there time of y^e small pox 1^s."

So prevalent was this disease in this year that a small house was hired and prepared for the reception of the infected :

" 1749. Dec. 15. P^d Brotherton's Bill for putting up a chimney on a Town house, 17^s.

" P^d Tho^s Anstee for Thetching a Town house, 1^s. 8^d."¹

The year 1754 was marked by a visitation of some unusual sickness, for twelve persons, chiefly women, died in the course of six months, between March and September. But after this date there are no records of more than the usual rate of mortality.

In the Present Century.

Census Returns.

				<i>Population.</i>		<i>Total.</i>	<i>Houses.</i>		
				<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>		<i>Inhabited.</i>	<i>Uninhabited.</i>	<i>Building.</i>
1801	...	...	...	169	225	394	—	—	—
1811	...	...	...	226	223	449	—	—	—
1821	...	...	...	245	246	491 ¹	110	1	1
1831	...	...	...	298	301	599	—	—	—
1841	...	...	...	314	290	604 ²	119	1	1
1851	...	...	...	319	300	619	129	2	1
1861	...	...	...	307	280	587	128	7	—
1871	...	...	...	—	—	588	130	—	—
1881	...	...	...	256	259	515	130	3	—
1891	...	...	...	227	226	453	120	6	1

The increase of population in the early decades of the present century may be partly accounted for by the advantages offered through the opening of the Oxford and Birmingham Canal in 1790. Before this the same difficulty was felt here, as in the neighbouring parishes, of obtaining coal, the nearest point from which it could be fetched being in the adjoining county of Bucks. "The wood in Souldern, which at present is no profit to the Church, is great advantage to "the inhabitants, finding them yearly fuel, and some to sell."² But as soon as a coal supply became procurable many families from the neighbourhood were induced to remove hither.

Only two representatives of the old families who were landowners in the XVIIth century now remain, Mr. Gough and Mr. Hill. The latter resides in a large, quaint old house in the centre of the village. The name of John Hill occurs among the landowners at the enclosure of 1613, and the baptisms, marriages and deaths of successive members of this family constantly occur in the church registers. Their names also from time to time appear among those elected to different parish offices.

In 1821 the population consisted of 110 separate families, dwelling in the same number of houses, of whom ninety were employed in agriculture, sixteen in trade, and four not comprised in either of these classes.

" A list of poor families in the parish of Souldern in the year 1821.

1. Solomon Line	...	4 in family.	|	3. John Creek	...	4 in family.
2. Thomas Blencowe	1	„		4. Samuel Clifton	...	4 „

¹ Souldern Constables' and Overseers' Accounts.

² Memorandum in parish chest.

5. Samuel Roberts ...	3 in family.	31. Thomas Blencowe } the younger }	5 in family.
6. George Lake ...	3 "	32. William Turner ...	3 "
7. John Westbury ...	4 "	33. Samuel Neale ...	9 "
8. George Foster ...	5 "	34. William Green ...	2 "
9. Thomas Bonner ...	4 "	35. William Hemings ...	3 "
10. Henry Colman ...	7 "	36. James Flemings ...	3 "
11. James Finch ...	4 "	37. Thomas Heath ...	9 "
12. William Finch ...	4 "	38. John Jarvis ...	11 "
13. James Finch the } younger }	4 "	39. Ann Neale ...	5 "
14. John Blencowe ...	7 "	40. William Allen ...	8 "
15. John Bourton ...	3 "	41. Elizabeth Biddle ...	4 "
16. John Rouse ...	5 "	42. Robert Evans ...	5 "
17. John Warmington ...	9 "	43. Mary Hitchman ...	6 "
18. John Clifford ...	7 "	44. William Golding ...	3 "
19. Richard Lett ...	4 "	45. Thomas Hames ...	7 "
20. John Lake ...	8 "	46. William Cox ...	7 "
21. John Barnes ...	8 "	47. Thomas Rouse ...	2 "
22. James Nix ...	9 "	48. John Mayett ...	6 "
23. John Line ...	2 "	49. William Rouse ...	3 "
24. William Swetman ...	6 "	50. William Smith ...	5 "
25. James Jarvis ...	6 "	51. William Nix ...	3 "
26. Matthew Smith ...	4 "	52. William Jews ...	1 "
27. Richard Bates ...	8 "	53. John Hicatt ...	3 "
28. John Walter ...	3 "	54. Ann Dawes ...	1 "
29. Samuel Pets ...	4 "	55. Robert Cecil ...	3 "
30. James Jarvis ...	2 "	56. Sarah Matthews.	

" Poor persons more than 60 years old, all of good character.

1. Richard Bennet and his wife.
2. The widow Bull.
3. The widow Bates.
4. George Swetman and his wife.
5. William Inds.
6. Thomas Lake and his wife.
7. The widow Colman.
8. John Syruitt.
9. William Welsh and his wife.
10. Edward Clifford and his wife.
11. Joseph Hicatt and his wife.
12. Matthew Smith and his wife.
13. The widow Jarvis.
14. Fanny Isham.
15. Thomas Biddle.

"One poor man crippled with Rheumatism, Joseph Matthews.

"A copy of this sent to Oxford to Mr William Tubb, Jan'y 4, 1821.

"R^t JONES."

Fifty years later, in 1871, the separate families were 134, dwelling in 130 houses, showing that the plan of overcrowding had found its way into this as into so many other villages at this time. Ten years later this had been righted, 128 families in 1881 inhabiting 130 houses. In 1891 127 families were occupying 125 houses, though at that time there were six houses without inhabitants. The population reached its greatest height in 1871, but from that year a steady decrease has set in.

PRESENT ESTIMATED EXTENT OF THIS PARISH.

1,451 a. 2 r. 37 p. (not far off the 46 yards = 1,472 acres at which it was measured in old times).

GROSS ESTIMATED RENTAL.

1873.	1874.	1883.	1889.
£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£
4,201 6 3 ...	4,191 12 7 ...	4,023 4 1 ...	3,965

RATEABLE VALUE.

£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£
3,389 2 6 ...	3,387 2 6 ...	3,552 0 0 ...	3,479

COUNTY ASSESSMENT.

1873.	1883.	1889.
£	£	£
3,398 ...	3,370 ...	3,552

AGRICULTURAL RETURNS.

Year	Wheat (Acres).	Barley (Acres).	Oats (Acres).	Beans (Acres).	Peas (Acres).	Potatoes (Acres).	Turnips (Acres).	Mangold (Acres).	Carrots (Acres).	Cabbage (Acres).	Vetches or Tares (Acres).
1884	130	100½	88½	42½	—	3½	58½	14	½	—	15
1885	143½	88½	44½	63	—	2½	78½	12½	½	—	3
1886	114	157½	70½	30½	—	3½	52	11½	½	1	7½
1887	91½	78½	68½	41	5	18½	87½	14½	1½	½	2½
1888	128½	96½	63½	34½	—	12	62½	7½	1	½	6
1889	112½	103½	68½	24	9	24½	69½	6½	¾	—	6
1890	129	99½	84½	39	6	14	48½	10	1	—	8½
1891	93½	146½	41½	25½	7	10½	64½	8½	½	2½	7½

THE SCHOOL.

Among the families resident in the village, who were descended from a long line of fore-fathers, was that of *Mynne* or *Minn*. Two memorial stones within the church were noted by the antiquary Dr. Rawlinson, "Mary Mynne, 1659," "Gulielmus Minn, 1665."

On a stone in the south aisle there is also inscribed :

"Sacred to the memory of William James Minn, seaman, son of Robert and Hannah Minn, of Shrewsbury, who perished at sea on the night of the 19th June, 1849, in 30 deg. S.E. and 10°30 deg. W. longitude, aged 18 years and 10 months, to the great grief of all who knew him."

And,

"To the memory of James Minn, soldier, brother of the above-named Robert. He likewise died at sea on his voyage to Canada, in the year 1831, aged 44 years. He served fourteen years in the Hussars, under the Marquis of Anglesey, and two years in the Peninsula, in the 3rd Regt. of Lancers, and had an honourable discharge from both Regts. His first action was Corunna, his last Waterloo.—'The sea shall give up her dead.'"

About the year 1851 a member of this family, *James Minn*, left by his will a piece of ground in the street of the village for a school to be built upon it, and two cottages adjoining for the accommodation of the teachers, directing that the teaching in the school is to be conducted according to the principles of the established Church of England, and appointing the Squire and Rector of Aynhoe, with the Rector of Souldern, trustees of this bequest. After the Education Act of 1870 the school was enlarged and improved, and in the place of the two cottages a schoolmaster's house was erected. It has an endowment annually worth £59 6s. 6d. The average number of children now attending varies from sixty-three to sixty-five.

PROVIDENT CLUB.

A yearly subscription to the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford was commenced in 1786.

"Pd Mr Griffiths for Souldern subscription to the Hospital, £1 1s."

A sick club or Friendly Society was established in 1816. Members pay an entrance fee of 5s., and a quarterly payment of 4s. Honorary members subscribe from 10s. to one guinea yearly. The allowance during illness is 9s. per week for one year, and half pay for any time of sickness afterwards. At the end of every five years the surplus fund, with the exception of £1 per head, is divided among the members. At the present time this club numbers seventy-nine members.

PUBLIC CHARITIES.

In 1430 some land and houses in this village (then written *Culdon*) were sold, and they subsequently passed into the hands of an unknown benefactor, who gave them as part of the endowment of a charity which he founded in Bicester.¹ In 1551 they are described as "lands and tent^s in *Sowthorne*, otherwyse *Sowldorne*," and two years later the yearly rent is given :

"In Sowlderne.

"Will ^m Rogers payeth bi the yeare	} x ^s "
"Thomas Rogers payeth bi the year	

This property was described in 1613 as "a messuage and one yard land," then called "Bister Land," and by the enclosure of that year it was exchanged for "one piece of land lying at Breed, containing 26 acres." In the last century it was said "Bissiter yard land accounted the worst in the town was leased out at £20 per ann., now £26, worth £30, no part ploughed nor any meadow belonging to it. He that rented it thought to make a benefit."² This land forms at the

History of Bicester, p. 56.

² Entry in book of Memoranda in parish chest.

present time two pasture fields, measuring about twenty acres, and yielding until lately a clear rental of rather more than £40 per annum, exclusive of a tithe rent-charge payable by the tenant. The rent is now reduced.

CARTWRIGHT'S CHARITY.¹

"The sum of £2 3^s 4^d is paid annually by William Ralph Cartwright Esq^e, of Aynhoe, the "proprietor of an estate in Souldern."

"This appears to be part of a rent-charge of £9 19^s 4^d, mentioned in the marriage settlement "of the said William Ralph Cartwright, dated 8th April, 1784, whereby certain estates in Aynhoe, "Souldern, Deddington, Clifton and Hempton were settled, and which contain in the covenant "against incumbrances the following clause 'other than and except a certain annual sum of "£9 19^s 4^d issuing and payable for ever, out of all or some part of the premises and hereditaments "hereby conveyed to the poor of Aynhoe, Crowton and Souldern, for bread, given by the last will of "Richard Cartwright Esq^e deceased,' (dated 1st February 1633)."

"With the sum of £2 3^s 4^d five eightpenny loaves are provided, which are given by the "Overseers, in the Church to five poor widows, who are appointed in the same manner as those "who receive Dodwell's bread."

DODWELL'S CHARITIES.

The family of Dodwell, yeomen, of good local position, were resident in Souldern through two centuries and more. The name first occurs in 1523-4, among the sub-collectors of the lay-subsidy of that year.

William Dodwell was an old inhabitant living in 1584.

John Dodwell was churchwarden in 1639 and 1643.

Other members of this family served that office from 1647 to 1733. They were connected with a family of the same name in Oxford, of whom some were buried here:

"Thomas Dodwell, fourth son of Richard Dodwell of Oxford and Anne his wife died "3rd January 1634.

"Philippus Dodwell senex de Civ^s Oxoniensis sepultus Feb. 24. 1683."

Thomas Dodwell had been for many years a prosperous tradesman.

"Thomas Dodwell senex olim ministarius negotiator sept^r Sept. 16. 1704."

He was the donor of two parish charities.

The last memorials of this family in the Parish Church are:

"Here lyeth the body of Mary wife of John Dodwell gen^t., died March 14, 1702, aged 67. "Also the said John Dodwell, April 4th, 1723 aged 82 years; and Mary his second wife June 1720 "aged 70."

Contemporary with, and related to, the Dodwells were the Bignell family, who probably derived their name from the village of Bigenhull (Bignell), adjoining Bicester, and were for many years landowners in Souldern. The first known mention of a resident of this name is found in the records of the Archdeacon of Oxford's Court:

"W^m Bignell } xxvth March 1634.

"of Soulderne } The said William appeared before Mr. Sam Gardner &c. acknowledged that

¹ Charity Commissioners' Report, 1826.

“ he was pr'te at a marriage made betweene Elias Birch and Sibill Humfreys widd' in the Chappell
 “ of Biddlesdon Com. Bucks (who were marryed as it is p'ted) wthout banes or license. He answers
 “ on oath that hee was pn'te in the s^d Chappell aforesaid at the s^d marriage about St. Markes day
 “ last and that hee beleeveth they had not license to marry neither were banes asked at all but the
 “ s^d marriage was finished & done by one Mr. Taylor a minister living at Biddlesdon as hee
 “ beleeveth according to y^e forme prscribed in the booke of Co^mon prayer. Then being asked
 “ who were p't at the s^d marriage hee answeareth one Alice Day the wife of Edward Day of Oxon
 “ & a young youth namely Tho Revell of Brackley the s^d pties the minister this respondent & none
 “ else and hee further answeareth that the pties marryed did pay the s^d minister for the s^d
 “ marriage x^s. as they told this respondent. The lord having accepted this confession pronounced
 “ him to have fallen into &c. and the marriage to be denounced in the Church of Souldern.”

Dr. Rawlinson mentions a tablet in the Parish Church to the memory of Elizabeth Bignell, who was buried therein on March 12, 1699:

“ There is a slab over the S. doof of the Church inscribed ‘ Underneath this aisle lie interred
 “ ‘ the remains of the Bignell family for many generations. This stone is erected to record also the
 “ ‘ interment of Thomas son of Thomas and Mary Bignell, who died April 7, 1796, aged 71 years;
 “ ‘ and of Sarah his wife who died March 5, aged 72 years.’ ”

Different members of this family are mentioned in Thomas Dodwell's bequests:

1. *Dodwell's Gift for Clothing.*

“ Thomas Dodwell of Souldern, by indentures of lease and release dated 17th and 18th August
 “ 1694 conveyed to Robert Bignell, and John Watson, and their heirs three acres and a half
 “ of meadow ground, lying in the town meadow of Souldern to the use of himself for life and after
 “ his death to the use of Mary Bignell, her heirs and assigns for ever, upon trust that the said Mary
 “ Bignell and her heirs should after his decease pay into the hands of the Churchwardens and
 “ Overseers for the time being of the parish of Souldern aforesaid, the yearly sum of 30^s at
 “ one entire payment on the 24th day of June to the intent that the said Churchwardens and
 “ Overseers should every year lay out and dispense the said yearly sum of 30^s, and every part
 “ thereof, on the clothing of two such of the poor people inhabitants of Souldern aforesaid as the
 “ major part of the landholders of Souldern, being Protestants, and having the quantity of a quarter
 “ of a yardland or more within the parish, should, from time to time, nominate and appoint, and to
 “ no other use or purpose whatever.”

The Charity Commissioners reported in 1826:

“ The sum of £1 10s. is annually paid by Mr. John Merry, the owner of the premises charged,
 “ and is laid out by the Overseer in cloth, which is given at a Vestry among five or six poor and
 “ industrious Protestants not receiving parish relief.”

For the last two years three men and three women have received a sufficient quantity of cloth to make them a jacket or petticoat. The oldest resident parishioners, being married persons, receive it in succession.

2. *For Bread.*

“ 18 August 1694. By settlement of this date made by Thomas Dodwell of Souldern
 “ Yeoman Two Closes containing by estimation 2 acres more or less, commonly called the
 “ Millsedges lying and being within the Parish and Precincts of Souldern were conveyed and

“limited. To the use of Mary Laxton, Spinster (niece of the said Tho^s Dodwell), during her life
 “upon trust that she the said Mary Laxton and her assigns should from time to time and at all
 “times thereafter during her life, weekly and every week upon the Lord’s day commonly called
 “Sunday, and in forenoon of the said day, distribute and deliver, or cause to be distributed
 “and delivered at or in the Parish Church of Souldern aforesaid unto four poor persons inhabitants
 “of Souldern aforesaid to be from time to time nominated by the major part of the freeholders
 “there (being Protestants and having the quality of a quarter of a yard land in Souldern aforesaid)
 “One three Penny loaf of baker’s bread apiece (that is to say) to each and any of the said poor
 “persons one such three penny loaf.

“And after the decease of the said Mary Laxton to the use of John Bignell (a kinsman of
 “the said Tho^s Dodwell) his heirs and assigns for ever upon trust that he and they should
 “from time to time, and at all times from and after the decease of the said Mary Laxton for
 “evermore, weekly and every week upon the Lord’s day commonly called Sunday and in the
 “forenoon of the same day every week distribute and deliver or cause to be distributed and delivered
 “at or in the said Parish Church of Souldern aforesaid unto four poor persons inhabitants of
 “Souldern aforesaid to be from time to time nominated as aforesaid one three penny loaf of baker’s
 “bread a piece (that is to say) to each of the said four persons one such three penny loaf. But if
 “in case the said Landholders of Souldern aforesaid should at any time for ever thereafter neglect
 “or refuse to nominate the said four persons above mentioned that then the said Mary Laxton
 “should during her life, and the said John Bignell his heirs and assigns for ever after should
 “distribute and deliver the said four three penny loaves at the times and places before appointed
 “unto any four of the poor Protestant inhabitants of Souldern aforesaid which in their judgment
 “should most need the same.

“12th March 1699. By deed of this date the above uses were revoked, and a little Close
 “in Souldern called Little Millsedge and the above two closes called the Millsedges were conveyed
 “and limited.

“To the use of Robert Bignell (a kinsman of Tho^s Dodwell) his heirs and assigns for ever
 “upon trust (amongst other things) that the said Rob^t Bignell his heirs or assigns should distribute
 “and deliver bread to four poor persons weekly for ever as directed in the first above mentioned
 “settlement.

“15th March 1699. By Tho^s Dodwell’s will of this date the uses and estates above limited
 “were confirmed and made absolute.”

The Commissioners observed in 1824: “The above donation is now given according to
 “the will of the donor in every respect by the present Proprietor W^m Minn of Souldern
 “aforesaid.”

POORS’ ALLOTMENTS.

“By an Award drawn up for the inclosure of lands in Souldern, confirmed by a decree in
 “Chancery, dated 29th June, 10th James I. it is stated amongst other things that for the better
 “provision and maintenance of the poor of the said town of Souldern, the Surveyors with the
 “consent, and good liking of the lord of the manor, and the principal landholders, set out to and
 “for the use and behoof of the poor inhabitants of Souldern aforesaid, a parcel of ground at Coles’s

"Cross containing 7 acres, a plot called The Green containing 5 acres, and the Pits and the Bowling Green containing 1 acre.

"And it was also directed, with the like consent and agreement that the incumbent of the said parish and his successors should pay yearly, in lieu of a piece of waste ground adjoining the parsonage to the Churchwardens of Souldern for the time being, for the proper use and behoof of the poor inhabitants there the sum of 5^s every Lady-day.

"There are no trustees appointed therein, nor are there any directions as to the mode in which the property was intended to be used, or as to the application of the profits.

"Previously to the year 1814 the greater part of this land was uninclosed, and every person turned out their horses and cattle upon it as they pleased; and the whole property was a subject of constant contention amongst the poor.

"On the 2nd April 1814 Robert Kilbye Cox, and Richard Drope Gough preferred a petition to the Court of Chancery setting forth the decree of the 29th June 10th James 1st by which the award and inclosure were confirmed; and praying that it might be referred to the Master to appoint proper persons to be trustees of the land allotted for the poor of Souldern and to let and receive the rents of the same, and to approve of a scheme for the application of the rents; and that William Godfrey and others might be ordered to deliver up to the trustees, such parts of the said lands as were in their possession respectively and to account for the rents thereof. Upon which it was ordered that it should be referred to the Master to enquire whether the lands mentioned in the petition were part of those allotted to the said poor, and, if so, that he should take an account of the rents, and profits, which the persons in possession had received; and also to appoint proper persons to be trustees of the said lands; and it was ordered that the rest of the petition should stand over until the Master should have made his report.

"The Master's report dated 18th March 1815 was confirmed 25th May following, and Robert Kilbye Cox, Richard Drope Gough, William Ralph Cartwright, John Coker Esq^{es}, John Hill and William Minn gentleman, the lord of the manor for the time being and the rector, Churchwardens, and Overseers of Souldern for the time being, were appointed Trustees of the said lands; and it was ordered that the persons, whom the Master had found were in possession of the said premises should deliver up the same to the said trustees, and that the costs of the petitioners should be paid out of the rents and profits of the said lands.

"No order however was made with respect to the future application of the rents and profits.

"The property above described consists

"1st Of the ground at Coles' Cross, containing 7 acres, being arable land; and about three quarters of an acre, part of the Green, let on lease, dated 7th May 1819 to Robert Kilbye Cox Esq^e for 99 years from the date thereof, at the yearly rent of £1 in consideration of £236 7^s 6^d.

"This lease was granted upon the terms above mentioned, the same having been approved by the Master in Chancery, for the purpose of paying off the debt incurred by the proceedings above mentioned, and which amounted to that sum. The annual value of the premises was then estimated at £12 but does not now exceed £9 or £10.

"2^d The remaining part of the Green and the Bowling leys.

"Upon these premises there are 17 cottages, which have been built there, partly by the parish, and partly by the poor themselves. Each of these cottages has a small garden annexed to it, and there are 40 gardens besides.

"The cottages and gardens are occupied by poor persons ; every one who occupies a house and garden pays to the trustees 1^s 6^d, and every one occupying a garden only 1^s.

"The poor persons consider that they have a right in the cottages that they hold. They are never turned out during their lives, and upon their death their families succeed paying the same rent. If a cottage falls vacant and there are none of the family to succeed the Trustees appoint the oldest poor inhabitant who will take it.

"The gardens do not descend to the families in the same way ; but when an occupier dies the Trustees give it to the oldest poor inhabitant, who had not a garden before.

"This mode of occupation of the Green has existed for about five years. Previous to that time the land lay open.

"3^d The pits and the bowling green, containing not more than half an acre of pasture are let to Henry Essery, as yearly tenant at the rent of £1 1^s, which is the fair value. There are roads adjoining to this land, and encroachments have been made, by building four cottages, and fencing out small gardens to them, which being included, would make the plot of ground about one acre, as described in the award. These houses and gardens are comprised in the number above-mentioned.

"4th A parcel of land adjoining the parsonage, for which 5^s is paid yearly.

"All the rents arising from these premises, amounting, if the whole were collected, to about £5 are carried to an account, separate from the Overseers' book, together with the rent of a cottage built upon the waste, near the turnpike gate, 10^s, and the feeding of different lanes in the parish, which are let annually by auction, now held by four tenants at rents amounting to £1 16^s.

"The amount is distributed under the directions of the vestry, amongst all the poor of the parish, none being omitted. Those who have no cottage or garden, except two or three, who may receive less, have 5^s each. Those who have cottages and gardens receive 1^s. A small surplus is always reserved for poor widows, or old worn-out men."

The nominal rent of a shilling is paid annually by each tenant.

WESTCAR'S CHARITY.

On the borders of the parish southwards, by the side of the road leading to Somerton, a house was built, probably at the end of the XVIIth century, which was named from its situation "Hill House," commanding as it does one of the finest views in the Midland counties. A field on the same level is called Hill-field. This house was of some pretensions, having an ornamental Queen Anne's garden, wherein are two summer houses and a bowling green. This house was occupied, and probably built, by some members of the Westcar family when they came to reside at Souldern. A portion of the present farm-yard is still called The Kennels, for at the beginning of the last century a Mr. Westcar was joint master with Mr. Drope Gough of a pack of harriers, which were kept partly here and partly in Souldern village. Several members of the Westcar family are buried at Souldern.

Thomas Westcar, gent. (Ob. Sept. 27, 1788, aged 72).

Elizabeth (his wife), (Ob. Aug. 10, 1805, aged 88).

Samuel (his son), (Ob. May 11, 1793, aged 33).

Mary (his daughter), (Ob. June 20, 1793, aged 35).

Thomas (eldest son), (*Ob.* March 1, 1809, aged 53).

Elizabeth (eldest daughter), (*Ob.* March 31, 1820, aged 65).

"Elizabeth Westcar, of Hill House, in the parish of Souldern, by will dated 19th February, 1820, gave to John Westcar, and William Tubb, certain property therein mentioned, upon trust, to sell the same, and to make certain payments thereout; and upon further trust that they, the said John Westcar, and William Tubb, and the survivor of them, his executors or administrators should stand possessed of the residue of the monies to arise from such sale, in trust, for the purposes hereafter mentioned, that is to say; as to the sum of £400 part thereof, upon trust, to invest the same in their own names or name, in the purchase of stock, in the public funds, or in government securities, at interest, and to alter the securities, as occasion should require, and as they should think expedient, and to pay, apply, and lay out the dividends, interest, and annual proceeds thereof to arise or to be received by them or him as follows; one half thereof in the purchase of clothing, and the other half thereof in the purchase of bread, to the use of the poor of Souldern, to be given and distributed yearly on Christmas day, in such proportions and in such manner, as the said John Westcar and William Tubb, or the survivor of them the executors or administrators of such survivor should in their or his discretion think fit and direct; and as to the sum of £200, upon trust, to invest the same in the like manner, with like power to alter the securities, and to pay over the dividends and annual proceeds thereof to the schoolmaster for the time being of the National School at Souldern aforesaid, or otherwise permit and empower him to receive and take the same."

"These legacies were laid out by the executors in the purchase of £518 10^s. navy five per cents., which is now converted into £544 8^s. 6^d. four per cents., producing an annual dividend of £24 15^s. 6^d."

"The dividends have hitherto been received by the late William Tubb of Oxford, and paid by him, part in the purchase of bread, clothes, or blankets, which he distributed himself amongst the poor of Souldern, and part to the master of the National School in Souldern, according to the proportions of the two several legacies. We are unable to state the particulars of the distribution in consequence of the illness of Mr. Tubb at the time of our enquiry, and his subsequent death; but there is no doubt that the dividends were properly distributed, though it is suggested, that, if Mr. Tubb had been more intimately acquainted with the parish, the objects of charity might have been more judiciously selected."

Mr. Jones (Rector) noted in the Church Register in 1821 :

"Miss Westcar's Charity is £25 18^s 6^d per annum."

The present owner of Hill House is Major Horrocks, who married one of the descendants of the Westcar family, but he is an absentee and a stranger to Souldern. A distant cousin of the family at Souldern married Mr. Crook, whose son, Mr. Rowland Crook, lately deceased, was the last remaining representative of the Westcar family.

THE PARISH CHURCH.

As members of the ancient Church of this country, we of the present day possess the sacred edifices which our forefathers erected, and to which we have made, and are still making, many additions. From them also we have inherited property in tithes and lands, the present endowments of the Church. The Norman Conquest introduced a new era in the Church as well as in the State.

No sooner had Jordan de Sai become possessed of this manor, than he built a new church for the use of his dependants. The only remains of this church now existing is the western tower, which is Early Norman work, built before A.D. 1100, of rude, massive construction and walls of great thickness. Under this the disused altar of the XVIIth century has been placed.

The Font, which stands near the south door, is very old, of the simplest form, circular, with a plain square base. It may be Saxon or Norman, and it is not easy to decide this question. It has been much injured, for pieces the size of a man's hand have been knocked out of it.

It appears to have been the practice in this part of the diocese, in consequence of its distance from the seat of the bishop, to allow the consecration of new churches and chapels to be deferred for an indefinite period, until an opportunity should offer from an occasional visit of the bishop.¹ The arms of Hugh de Wells, Bishop of Lincoln (1209-35) were placed in one of the windows of this church, and, as he was very active in the oversight of his diocese, it is probable that this Norman church was not formally consecrated until his time. It was then dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The Nave of the Norman church was subsequently pulled down, and in its place the present Nave and South Aisle were built. The nave is separated from the aisle by three pointed arches, resting on round columns, the capitals and bases of which are Early Norman work, which therefore probably belonged to the old Norman nave, these having been reversed when placed in their present position. The westward arch has a curious bracket, with three heads upon it. The windows of the aisle are elaborate, and exhibit some beautiful tracery of Early Decorated work. Here, too, is a Decorated Piscina, with a very deep drain. The Porch is of about the same date. It has a stone bench from end to end on one side, and a shorter one on the other, with a square-headed window above each. A doorway, well moulded, without capitals to the jambs, the labels terminating in heads, leads into the aisle. In the XVIth century the nave roof and the north and south clerestory were added, both being very poor work, having nothing better than square openings, probably the design of some village builder. A cornice of this church is engraved in Rickman's "Architecture." There were some coats-of-arms in one of the chancel windows, which Dr. Rawlinson saw in 1718 and noted :

1. Or a lion rampant sable.

(These are the arms of the bishop of the diocese, Hugh de Wells. They were also in the church of Kidlington, near Oxford.)

2. Or, a cross engrailed sable.

(Bindon Abbey—Brockton—Bruton—Gifford—Heshun.)

3. St. George's armes.

4. Gules a castle or.

Castelle—Doncaster co. Berks.

Gules a tower or, Sole, London.

Gules a tower embattled or. Hutching's Somerset.²

These arms are no longer to be seen, having been probably destroyed or carried away when the old chancel was pulled down.

In the early part of the XVIIth century, during the incumbency of Mr. Harding (1622-45), and probably through his active exertions, the tower was furnished with four bells, the old bells

¹ Diocesan History, Oxford, by Rev. E. Marshall, p. 37.

² See Papworth.

being then probably recast, and new ones added from Messrs. Bagley's foundry at Chacomb, Oxon. The Sanctus Bell was added after the restoration of the monarchy, being probably a recast of a former one, but to be no longer used for its original purpose, but as "the Parson's Bell," or "Ting-Tang," to be rung five minutes before the commencement of divine service.

<i>No.</i>	<i>Inscription on Bells.</i>	<i>Diameter in inches.</i>	<i>Estimated Weight. Cwts.</i>
1	<p>* * *</p> <p>1635 CANTATE DOMINO CANTECV M NOVVM. HENRY BAGLE MADE ME</p> <p><i>* The asterisks represent bells.</i></p>	28½	4¾
2	<p>✠ W SANC W TA W DO W M</p> <p>✠ Represents a barrel occupying the centre of a shield; above the barrel the letter W, and below the barrel the letter C. This is the founder's mark, and is evidently a rebus on his name. The arrow-head under the barrel may be a bolt for a cross-bow, and, if so, it would read W Bolt-ton (Bolton). Dr. Raven suggests Middleton, and the letter at the left corner at the bottom to be C, possibly for Coventry. There are some other letters at the opposite corner, very indistinct. The crown is drilled for clapper staple, but the bell is not used.</p>	30½	5½
3	<p>⊕ H B I 63I ⊕ † CVM VOCE † VCVNDISSIMO PRESEQVOR</p>	32¾	6½
4	<p>VOBISCVM COCRDO DEVM LAVDARE ⊕ HENRY BAGLE ⊕ 163I</p> <p>The Sanctus Bell, which is hung with a wheel, is 14 inches diameter, and has on it H · B · 1665 in the same characters as Nos. 1, 3, 4, having a scroll frequently used by that family of bell founders.</p>	36½	8½

If the ages before Queen Elizabeth's reign were distinguished for building up, those which immediately followed were alike remarkable for pulling down. There were ruins everywhere! Ruins of cloisters, halls, dormitories, courts, chapels and churches. Ruins of carved altar-pieces, canopies, statues, painted windows, and carved fonts. Ruins of old faiths and old traditions. The walls of old monasteries were left standing, because it was too much trouble to pull them down. Parish churches, denuded of their ancient ornaments, had nothing substituted to relieve their nakedness. The people of that time loved to live and worship among ruins, ruins everywhere!¹

By occasional patchings and cheap rough repairs, this old church has been preserved through the three last centuries from the ravages of wind and rain, but little else has been done. The nave roof inserted in the XVIth century had been constructed of inferior material, so that after the lapse of a century it needed a large repair:

¹ London, by Walter Besant, chap. VI. (1892).

				£	s.	d.
" 1698.	Carpenters for worke at y ^e Church	...	...	12	12	6
	For timber for y ^e Church	...	...	23	7	6
	For plumbers for worke at y ^e Church	...	...	35	3	11
	For pointing y ^e Church	...	...	4	13	2
	For five masons and labourers	...	...	1	11	8
	Sundry other items, in all amounting to	...	...	94	5	3 ¹¹

Twenty years later Dr. Rawlinson, the antiquary, visited Souldern, and noted :

" Incumbent Dr. Pearson, Instit. 1707 ; Church neat and well kept ; 5 bells."

Still later the church was " beautified " according to the taste of that day :

" 1758. P^d Mr. Busby for painting the Church, £3 3^s."

At the latter end of the last century this church suffered yet rougher handling. The then Rector, Mr. Horseman, entirely destroyed the old mediæval chancel, and in its stead, on greatly contracted foundations,² built the present low-roofed, room-like mean erection, an act of vandalism scarcely equalled in any other church.

The porches of village churches were at this time not unfrequently put to profane uses. Vagrants considered that they had a prescriptive right to " squat " in the open porch. A thriftless family within living memory took possession of the porch in this church, the old outer door having been doing duty in a pig-sty for many years past. After repeated evictions and recriminations a new door was provided, and kept locked.³

A western gallery was erected in 1815, which blocked up the tower arch, and hid two windows in the aisle.

Several of the original carved seats remained until 1855, when they were removed to make way for pews of the usual type, square, high, and constructed of common deal.

Within the last few years a beginning has been made to repair the breaches of many generations. In 1878 a faculty was obtained for removing the disfiguring gallery, and about the same time the columns and arches of the nave were stripped of their many coats of whitewash. A further restoration, it is hoped, is at hand. Measures have been taken, and plans prepared for the removal of the present caricature of a chancel, and erecting a new one, as far as is possible, on the ancient lines. A fund has been opened by the present Rector for this purpose at Messrs. Gillett and Co.'s bank in Oxford, to which a few subscriptions have been already paid, and others promised, the Bishop of the diocese expressing his approval of this undertaking by a donation of £25.

CHURCH GOODS.

In 1553 King Edward VIth's Commissioners visited this parish and summoned before them the churchwardens to give an account of all the property belonging to the Parish Church.

" This inventory indented made the 2nd day of May, the 6th in year of the reign of our " Sovereign Lord King Edward the 6th, of all the goods, plate, jewels, bells, and other ornaments

¹ Churchwardens' Book of Accounts.

² The area of the present chancel is at least eight feet less in length than the original one, and its breadth also has been considerably diminished.

³ History of Yarnton, by Mrs. Stapleton, p. 237. At Launton, during the first quarter of the present century, the church porch was used for the storing of hay for the rector's horses feeding in the churchyard.

“pertaining to the parish church of Souldern, in the County of Oxford, between Sir William Reynolds, Knight, Thomas Breedy, and Thomas Cowsford, amongst others, Commissioners appointed in the said County, for the survey of the said goods with the premises, of the one part, and Thomas Bond and Thomas Symes, of Souldern, aforesaid, of the other part: Witnesseth that all the goods and other like premises hereafter written belonging to the said Church were committed by the said Commissioners to the custody of Thomas Bond and Thomas Symes, with the sure undertaking that they will at all times be forthcoming and to be answered:

“Imprimis. Three pair of vestments of satin of Bridges (Bruges).

“Item. Six pair of white vestments, on[e] satin of Bridges, and the other white fustian.

“Item. One chalice of silver, parcel gilt.

“Item. Six copes of satin of Bridges.

“Item. Six candlesticks of brass.

“Item. One censer.

“Item. Six bells and a sanctus bell.”

But the churchwardens, like their brethren at Middleton, took ill charge of the goods committed to their custody. Presentments were subsequently made to the Archdeacon of Oxford's Court about the misappropriation which had been allowed, and some parishioners were summoned to give account of what they each knew of this.

“20 March, 1584.

“Office of the lord against } The penalty of contumacy has been respited until this day.
 “James Browne of Shold- } He appeared. Having been sworn, to the particular charged
 “ham. } he acknowledges that he hathe dwelte in *Soulderne* 54 yeares,
 “that he knewe certeyne churche goods in Mr *Stutchberies* wiffes hands, viz. candlesticks, a bason,
 “a crucifyxe, other in her hands or *Elizabeth Glidwells* hands and in y^e same weomens hands
 “certeyne hand bells and Banner clothes ‘crosse clothes’ and y^e crosse ‘crucifixe’ in Ihon
 “Dowgeles hands, a palme clothe & one chalice w^{ch} Mr *Stuttsburie* hathe in his hande for xl^s but ye
 “moneye he payed not yet as he thinketh all the vestments be in good wiffe Gledwell's hands.

“27 March, 1585.

“Office of the lord against } He was cited by John Dasie on Monday last. He appeared.
 “John Highcocke of Sol- } Having been sworn, to the bill of detection he acknowledges
 “dern. } he was borne at *Soulderne* and is now 60 yeares of age and for
 “his parte he knoweth not whether theare be enie coapes, vestements, chalices candlesticks or
 “crosses in enie persons hands in the Towne of *Souldren* or pisshe.—Dismissed.

“Office of the Lord against } She was cited on Monday aforesaid by Dasie. This having
 “Agnes Hale of the same. } been certified, and a third precognizance made the lord pro-
 “nounced her contumacious, and in penalty of excommunication. John Hale the son appeared
 “and having been sworn alleges that his mother is in years and has a rupture so that she cannot
 “conveniently be present without danger to her life. He acknowledges that in the year when this
 “deponent was Churchwarden he and his felowe did sell the Chalice and bought a Communion
 “cuppe, and that y^t was about 7 yeares paste.—Dismissed.

“Office of the lord against } He was cited on Monday last by Dasie. He appeared.
 “William Hodgett of the } Having been sworn to the particular charged he answers y^t
 “same. } he was borne at *Souldren* and is abowte 6 or 7 and thritty

“yeares of age and is nowe churchman theare for Wedowe *Gledwell* and for church goods theare
 “*wch* weare vsed in oulde tyme he knoweth none, saving onelye ij peeces of a candlestick, but hath
 “heard saye that theare be certayne goods in Mr *Stubbesburies* hands what the particulars be this
 “deponent knoweth not.

“3 April, 1585.

“Office of the lord against	} Cited &c. He denies that he knoweth of enie vestments, coapes, chalices crucifixes or such like kepte in the parishe of <i>Souldren</i> bye enie man theare or ells wheare.—Dismissed.
“Robert Wedon of Soul-	
“dern.	
“Office of the lord against	} Cited &c. He denies that he hathe enie church goods in his custodie or knoweth wheare enie is saving one sepulchre <i>wch</i> is turned to a Cubberd.—Dismissed.”
“William Dodwell of the	
“same.	

Entries in the Churchwardens' Book give an account of the church goods in later times :

“1643. Imprimis. A Communion cupp with a cover, a flagon of pewter, one surplice, one
 “silk stole, a cushion, 3 Table cloths, 3 Books, whereof two are of Jewell's works, the other a
 “homily book, a carpet for y^e Communion Table, a box for treasure with a key, a chest with 3 keys,
 “whereof the minister hath one, and each of the Churchwardens one, a cushion for the pulpit.

“1647. Paid for “our glass,” 6^s.

“ „ For mending frame, 4^d.

“1652. Delivered to Fferdinando Gough and Nicholas Rogers, one p. flagon, one silver cup,
 “and the Church box.

“1662. Paid for a Surplis, £2 7^s.

“ „ Payed for y^e Co^mmon prayer Booke, 8^s 6^d.

“1692. Delivered to William Bower, 1 carpite, 1 Table cloth, 1 Napkin, 1 Silver Bowl, 1
 “Silver Salver, 1 Pewter fflagon, 1 Pewter plate.

“1738. P^d for a new prayer book, and binding the Church Bible, £1 9^s.

“1751. For a Common Prayer book for Mr. Russell, £1 4^s :

“1758. A new Surplis, £2 3^s 6^d.

“ „ For making the surplis, 7^s 6^d.”

The following gifts have been presented of late years in aid of Dr. Rotton's efforts to improve
 the furniture and internal arrangements of the Church :¹

- I. A new altar of pitch pine, with oak top.
- II. Crimson cloth for the same.
- III. Covering of crimson cloth, silk fringed.
- IV. Polished brass cross (given by Mr. J. Cobbin).
- V. Four flower vases of polished brass.
- VI. Two polished brass candlesticks, each holding five lights.
- VII. Large eastern window curtain, serving at present as reredos.
- VIII. A pair of crimson dorsal curtains, suspended from polished brass rods.
- IX. Polished brass service. Desk for the altar, and Service book bound in morocco.
- X. Two sets of altar linen, one plain, the other of finest double damask (figured).
- XI. Book of Common Prayer, half-calf Red Rubric and Lectionary.

¹ These gifts are noted in the Church Register.

XII. A Bible, morocco-bound, Whit Sunday, 1881.

XIII. Curtains of crimson felt, fixed behind the great western arch, as well for ornament as for use.

XIV. September 14, 1880, three Vitremaine glass lights, "The Virgin and Child," "The Crucifixion," and "CHRIST, the King of Glory," were placed in the chancel window (a princely offering), also a small single light, "St. Peter," in the Tower. (J. H. G.)

XV. An oak lectern, presented by Dr. Rotton.

XVI. A new pulpit, given by F. Stanton, Esq.

The church plate at the present time consists of :

I. Silver paten (dated 1634).

II. Silver chalice (mentioned in 1643).

III. Silver flagon (given on Christmas Day, 1879, by J. H. Gough, Frederick Stanton, and George Stratton, Esqs.

IV. Silver paten (a thank-offering, August, 1880).

V. Electro-plated cruet (given by Dr. Rotton).

THE CHURCHYARD.

The peculiar feature in this churchyard is that it has no boundary wall or substantial fence on its north side. Whether such ever existed is not known. It was no unusual thing for churchyards to remain for a long time unenclosed, especially where, as in this case, they adjoined glebe lands. The north side of a church, too, being less seen and frequented, was seldom used for burial, unless some necessity arose. Thus, if no boundary fence existed here, and the ground remained unused, no general objection was probably made when some improving rector in times beyond memory appropriated the ground which lay between the church and the rectory premises, and caused it to appear as part of the garden attached to the latter. This attracted the attention of the poet Wordsworth, when visiting his friend, Mr. Jones, at the Rectory, and formed the subject of one of his Miscellaneous Sonnets :

"A PARSONAGE IN OXFORDSHIRE.

"Where holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,
 "Is marked by no distinguishable line ;
 "The turf unites, the pathways intertwine ;
 "And wheresoe'er the stealing footstep tends,
 "Garden, and that domain where kindred, friends,
 "And neighbours rest together, here confound
 "Their several features, mingled like the sound
 "Of many waters, or as evening blends
 "With shady night. Soft airs, from shrub and flower,
 "Waft fragrant greetings to each silent grave ;
 "And while those lofty poplars¹ gently wave
 "Their tops, between them comes and goes a sky
 "Bright as the glimpses of eternity
 "To saints accorded in their mortal hour."

Still the boundaries of the consecrated ground are known, and have been carefully preserved. Some marks at first were probably made in the turf to define them, but in 1831 more substantial ones were set up :

¹ The poplars were cut down a few years ago.

" 1831. May 28. Two stones set for the Churchyard Boundaries.¹

" 5 feet (of stone) at 3^d (per foot) for the Ch. yard boundaries 1^s 3^d."

The earliest gravestones in the churchyard are of the years 1662-82.

An altar tomb :

" In full and certain hope of the second coming of Christ resteth
 " here the body of John Neale who departed this life the
 " 7 day of June, 1662, and yeare of his age 51. Mary his
 " beloved wife and widow lying buried within this grave
 " departed this life Aug. 4, 1705, in the yeare of her age 89."²

On the tombstone are engraved the arms of the Masons' Company, granted by William Hancheston, Clarencieux King at Arms, in the year 1474, incorporated by letters patent of 29 Charles II., September 17, 1677.

There is a tradition still current among the old inhabitants of the village that Neale made this tomb with his own hands.

A headstone :

" Ann daughter of John Neale and Catherine his
 " wife died April 1, 1682."

Footstone :

" Katherine the wife of John Neale lying buried
 " with her daughter in her grave departed this
 " life the last day of April 1716 aged 75."

A headstone :

" Here lies interred the body of the ever dutiful
 " and obedient son of John and Catherine Neale
 " who departed this life the 11 day of July 1682
 " in the year of his age 21.
 " Pray doe not disturb his bones."

" In y^e churchyard 2 tombs against y^e wall ; i., plain stone, inscribed in front thus :—' Here
 " 'lyes interred the body of John King, gent., who departed this life December 24th Anno Domini
 " '1712, in the year of his age 71.' On the second thus :—' Here lyes interred the body of
 " 'Esther the wife of John King, who departed this life November 16 1709, in the yeare of
 " 'her age 78.'"³

The fee due to the rector for the burial of a non parishioner in and before the last century was 6s. 8d. :

" April 30, 1732. Receiv^d for breaking the ground for Mary Watkins of the parish of
 " Chesterton 6^s 8^d.

" Oct. 19, 1734. — for Tho Young of the parish of Farthingho 6^s 8d.

" Sept. 28, 1736. — of Mr. John King—for his mother parishioner of Middleton Stony.

" Jan^y 9, 1739. — for J. Coster 6^s 8^d.

" Dec. 20, 1741. — for John Hicatty of Brackley 6^s 8^d."

¹ Entries in the Churchwardens' Books.

it, but in 1882 it was refixed and cleaned at Dr. Rotton's expense.

² This tomb had sunk into the ground, and the inscription had become illegible through moss that had gathered upon

³ Rawlinson's MSS. in Bodleian Library.

No other entries of this kind occur.

A small piece of waste ground on the left-hand side of the south entrance to the church was enclosed and added to the churchyard in 1878, by vote of the parishioners in vestry assembled, and with the consent of the Bicester Highway Board. Two years later the old churchyard was closed by an Order in Council dated May 19, 1880, and at the same time more additional ground was obtained by purchase from Mr. Crook of the field on the south side of the church, which once formed part of the premises of the original Manor House. Neither of these additional grounds have been consecrated.

Many of the old graves having become ill-shapen and untidy, were levelled, and some trees and ornamental shrubs were planted in 1879, through the painstaking efforts of Dr. Rotton, the curate in charge, to improve the appearance of the holy ground.

THE PATRONS AND RECTORS.

To Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury and Metropolitan of all England, we owe the establishment of the parochial organization of the Church of this country, which has ever since continued. He pointed out to the people the advantage of having the constant ministrations of a regular pastor, instead of the occasional visits of a missionary. He encouraged the thanes to provide a dwelling-house and a parcel of glebe for the clergyman's residence, and permitted that the tithe of each manor, which the thane had hitherto paid into the common Church fund of the bishop, should henceforth be paid to the resident pastor for his own maintenance and the support of the local hospitalities and charities; and, lastly, he permitted each thane to have the right of selecting the pastor for his own manor out of the general body of the clergy. Thus grew up the whole establishment of the Church of England; thus each kingdom of the heptarchy became a diocese, each manor a parish, and thus the patronage of the benefices of England became vested in the lords of the manors. The Normans founded many monasteries, endowing them with lands and manors, and they further introduced the custom of giving to them the custody of parish churches of which they were patrons.¹ Thus Jordan de Sai, soon after he had built a new church at Souldern, and thus become by a second title its patron, was moved, in a day of sorrow, to make a more complete surrender of his gift by granting the advowson to the Abbey of Eynsham:

"I Jordan de Sai for the soul of my son William, on the day on which I have committed him to the tomb at Eynesham, have given up to the said Monastery the Church of Sulethorn. Witnesses Ranulph my son and others."²

This gift was many years afterwards confirmed by Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln:

"Omnibus Christi fidelibus *Hugo* Lincolnensis Episcopus, etc.—Confirmamus, etc., ex dono "*Jordani* de Sai ecclesiam de Sulethorn, etc."³

"Eynesham or Eynsham, a Benedictine Abbey, built or endowed by Aethelmore, or Ailmer, Earl of Cornwall and Devonshire, before A.D. 1005, to the honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St Benedict and All Saints. About the time of the Conquest it was almost left desolate, and given by Remigius, Bishop of Lincoln, to the monastery of Stow in Lincolnshire, but restored and much augmented upon the removal of the Abbot and Monks of Stow hither and by the lands,

¹ *Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages*, by Rev. E. L. Cutts (1872).

² *Chartulary of Ensharn*, numbered *Claudius A 8*, fol. 135, Cotton MSS. in British Museum.

³ Kennett's *P. A. An°* MCLXXXIV.

“ which Robert Bloet, Bishop of Lincoln, in the beginning of the reign of King Henry I. gave to
 “ this place in exchange for Newark and Stow.”¹

The first rector, nominated by Eynsham Abbey whose name has come down to us was
William de Warren al^s *Warrene*,² instituted in 1207, nephew of Robert, Abbot of Eynesham,
 and probably a member of the family of this name, lords of Upper Heyford.

His successors in due order were

1233, *Robert de Hay* al^s de Sulthorn,³

a son of Nichola de Hay, widow of Gerard, and mother of Richard de Camville, lords of Middleton.

He was non-resident, and Ralph, a clerk, was admitted as curate-in-charge.

“ De Ecclesia de Sulthorn.

“ Robertus, archidiaconus Oxeneford, &c. salutem. Notum sit nos recipisse Rad. clericum
 “ in personam ecclesiæ de Sulthorna ad presentationem Godefridi abbotis de Egnesham.”⁴

(?) *Geoffrey de Stokes*, Clerk,

instituted during Bishop Gravesend's episcopate (1258-79).

1288. *John de Bernewell*.

“ Inquisition taken at *Sulethorne*, before the Sheriff of Oxford, whether it be to the damage of
 “ the King or of others if the King grant to *John de Bernewell*, parson of the church of *Sulethorne*,
 “ that he may divert through the middle of his court of the parsonage aforesaid the course of the
 “ water which runs through the middle of the vill of *Sulethorne*, and hold that course to him and
 “ his successors. The Jurors say that it is not to the damage or nuisance of the King or of
 “ others, etc.”⁵

King Edward I. was then demanding a subsidy of one-fifth part of their incomes from the clergy, calculated on a new valuation of all ecclesiastical benefices, called Pope Nicholas' taxation, in 1292.

It was no slight exaction, when the Rector of this church was called on to pay £2 out of his supposed income of £10 to replenish the royal exchequer. Unlike the Rector of Bucknell, and some others of the clergy, John de Bernewell did not resist, but, however unwillingly, in some way or other he met the King's demand, and as a reward for his loyalty received a royal writ of protection, dated March 2, 1297.

The possession of the advowson and profits of a Parish Church by a religious house came in course of time, not unnaturally, to be viewed with much dislike and jealousy by the successive owners of manors and other parishioners, to whose use the church was dedicated, especially when this so generally led to a diverting of the tithes and other emoluments to purposes other than parochial. We therefore find constant efforts made in early times to deprive owners of church property of their rights, even where there were no just grounds for a claim to such. Thus the occupiers of this manor endeavoured to take away some rights of pasture in the common field, which belonged to the glebe lands. John de Bernewelle resisted this wrong by an appeal to law, and in 1291 it is recorded that “ John de Bernewelle, parson of the Church of Sulthorn had “ recovered his seisin against Thomas de Lewknor, and Lucy his wife, of his common of pasture in “ Sulthorn belonging to his freehold.”

¹ Tanner's Notit Monast., Oxfordshire.

² Muniments of Magdalen Coll., Oxford, Brackley, 62.

³ Kennett's P. A.

⁴ Dugdale's Mon^a.

⁵ Inq. ad quod damnum, 8 Nov., 22 Edw. I.

There is mention at this time of *Adam de Kereseye* as one of the clergy of this church. He was probably the curate, the person in residence receiving as part of his stipend the yearly rents of some property in the parish. Thomas de Lewknor was now dead, and his widow was in possession of the manor estate. She, like-minded with her husband, renewed the attacks upon the church property, which were again successfully resisted, and it is stated in Roll 28 that the Rector, Adam de "Kereseye gave information that he had recovered his seisin in the King's Court at Oxford "against Lucy, who had been wife of Thomas de Lewknore of 40^s rent in Sulthorn."¹

John de Bernewell died in 1305. Another opportunity thus occurred for the same lady's interference with Church rights and property. She now claimed, and even exercised, the right of presentation to the vacant rectory, having no ground whatever on which she could substantiate this claim. The Abbot of Eynesham was consequently obliged to bring the matter before the Court of King's Bench.

"*Thomas* Abbot of *Egnesham* by his attorney has appeared against *Lucia*, who was the wife "of *Thomas de Leuknore*, and *Peter de Schevyndon*, who were to be here to day, to hear the assise of "the last presentation, which same *Thomas* in the Court here appealed against them about the "advowson of the Church of *Soulthorn*, which is vacant, and the advowson of which the aforesaid "*Lucia* and *Peter* keep possession of against him, and they do not come to-day. Wherefore let the "judgment of the assise be taken against them by their default; and the jury say upon their oath "that the aforesaid *Thomas* in the time of the present king, and in the time of his father, 17 years "ago, as the true Patron of the same Church, presented to the same Church *John de Bernewell* who "was admitted on his presentation, and instituted in the same, after whose death the aforesaid "Church is now vacant. Having made enquiry about the right of the Abbot, they say, that in the "time of the king, the father of the present lord the king, in the XXth year of the same King *Henry*, "a certain agreement was made between one *Nicholas* formerly Abbot of *Egnesham*, a predecessor "of the present Abbot, and one *Lucia de Arderne*, the grandmother of the aforesaid *Lucia*, by which "agreement the same *Lucia* acknowledged that this advowson is the right of the aforesaid Abbey "of *Egnesham*, and that after the death of one *Gilbert*, Abbot, a predecessor of the present Abbot, "while the aforesaid Church was vacant, one *Richard de Gravesend*, formerly Bishop of Lincoln, "Ordinary of that place, and Advocate of the aforesaid Abbey, conferred that Church on one "*Geoffrey de Stokes*, his Clerk, who was instituted in the same; and having made enquiry about the "collusion between the parties which has been before spoken of contrary to the statute, and also "about the value of the same Church, they say, that there is no collusion between the parties "thereof such as has been before mentioned, etc., they say too that the Church is worth XX "marks yearly, and that the six months time has not yet elapsed.

"Therefore it is allowed that the aforesaid *Thomas* the Abbot may have a brief to the Bishop "of *Lincoln* that on his, the Abbot's presentation, he admit to the aforesaid Church a proper person, "and that the same Abbot may recover against them X marks for his losses."²

The royal brief was accordingly issued to the bishop:

"The Church of Sulthorn being vacant by the death of John de Bernewell, the last Rector "of the same, the Abbot and Convent of Eynesham have presented to the Bishop Master Simon "de Welle, priest, on the one part, and the lady Lucia de Leukenore Peter de Schevindon,

¹ Abbreviatio Rotulorum Originalium, Edw. I.

² Pleas before Ralph de Hingham and his brother justiciaries of the lord the King's Bench in Trinity Term, in the XXXIIIrd

year of the reign of Edward, son of King Henry (Given in Kennett's P. A.).

“ Capellane, on the other part, to the said Church, and enquiries having been made as to the same
 “ presentations, and the case having been long litigated in the King’s Court between each presenter
 “ the royal briefs are at length exhibited to the Bishop under this form, etc. Since we have for
 “ certain reasons caused to come before us the transcript of a certain settlement made in the Court
 “ of the lord king Henry our father, in the 20th year of his reign, before William of York and his
 “ companions the Justices Itinerant of the same our father in the County of Southampton, between
 “ Lucia de Arderne, plaintiff and Nicholas late Abbot of Eynesham defendant, about the advowson
 “ of the Church of Sulthorn with its appurtenances, in which it is contained that the aforesaid
 “ Lucia de Arderne remitted, and quit-claimed for ever for herself and her heirs to the same Abbot
 “ and his Successors and to his Church of Eynesham, all the right and claim which she had in all
 “ the aforesaid advowson with its appurtenances; and on the part of Thomas, now Abbot of
 “ Eynesham, we have received information that a certain Lucia, who was the wife of Thomas de
 “ Leukenore, the grand daughter and heiress of the aforesaid Lucia de Arderne, has now deforced¹
 “ the aforesaid advowson from the aforesaid Abbot contrary to the tenour of the aforesaid,
 “ settlement, whereby we enjoined our vicegerent at Oxford that he make known to the aforesaid
 “ Lucia, who was the wife of the aforesaid Thomas de Leukenore, by two free and lawful men of
 “ his county, that she be before us in the Octave of the Holy Trinity, wherever we then might be
 “ in England, to show if she has for herself or knows to say, any thing why the aforesaid Abbot,
 “ who now is, ought not to have the advowson of the aforesaid Church according to the tenour of
 “ the aforesaid settlement and further do, and receive what our Court may consider in this part,
 “ who though sufficiently summoned before us at the aforesaid term has not cared to come; We
 “ command you that notwithstanding the claim of the said Lucia, who was the wife of the aforesaid
 “ Thomas of Leukenore, you admit a fit person to the same Church on the presentation of the
 “ aforesaid Abbot.

“ T. R. le Brabazon at Westminster xxvi day of June, in the xxxiiird year of our reign.

“ Know also that Thomas Abbot of Eynsham, in our Court before our Justices at
 “ Westminster has recovered against Lucia who was the wife of Thomas of Leukenore, and Peter
 “ de Schevyndon, his presentation to the Church of Sulthorn by a certain assize there had and
 “ taken between them. And therefore we command you that on the presentation of the Abbot you
 “ admit a fit person to the aforesaid Church. T. R. de Hingham at Westminster on the xxvth day
 “ of June in the xxxiiird year of our reign. Therefore the aforesaid Master Simon is admitted to the
 “ aforesaid Church.

“ Kalends of July in the vith year at Thornholm, etc.”²

1305. Kal. July. *Simon de Welle*, or Welles.

Preferred from Stoke Abbots. To the record of his institution a memorandum is added:
 “ The lord recovered his presentation in the King’s Court against Lucia the wife of Thomas de
 “ Leukenore.”

1316. 11 Kal. Feb. *William de Dalderby*, Priest.

On the resignation of S. de Welle. Previously Rector of Newenton.

1335. 6 Kal. Aug. (July 27). *Peter de Dalderby*, Priest.³

¹ “Deforciavit”: This is to deforce some one from his right;
 to keep out of possession by forcible withholding.

² Lincoln Registers.

³ Reg. of Bishop Henry de Burghersh.

"Master *Peter de Dalderby*, Priest, presented by the Abbot and Convent of Eynesham "to the Church of *Sulthorn* by the resignation of Master *William de Dalderby* under the name of an "exchange to be made by him and the Canonry and Prebend of *Mershton* in the Church of ? "(Lincoln ?) which the same Master *William* held before, with the Church of *Sutton* near *Martely*, "which the aforesaid Master *Peter* held before as Rector."

1340. 13 Kal. July (June 19). *John de Dalderby*, an acolyte.
On the resignation of Master *Peter de Dalderby*.

1349. 5 Kal. March (Feby. 25). *Thomas de Soliers* al^s *Solers*, Clerk in Holy Orders.
A writ dated 2 Id. June (June 12) in the same year was addressed to the Dean of Burcester to license Master *Richard de Selby*, Priest, to the cure of this parish.

1361. 16 Kal. Jan'y (Dec. 17). *Simon de Lambrarne*, Clerk.
On the death of *Thomas Solers*.

(?) *William Person* or *Parsons*.¹
(*Thomas Tiwe*, Curate.)

1397¹ Jan. 18. *Simon Hoke*, Priest.
On the death of *Sir William Person*.

He resigned this rectory a fortnight after institution, and on January 21, *Walter Bullock*, clerk, was instituted, but on February 11 following the latter also resigned, and *Simon Hoke* was again presented and instituted. Three years later he exchanged this rectory.

"Memorandum, that on 9 Feb. 1400 *Sir Simon Hoke*, Rector of *Sulthorne*, and *Thomas Preston*, Rector of the Church of *Smerdon* in the Diocese of *Canterbury* have exchanged their "benefices."

1401. Feb. 9. *Thomas Preston*.
In the month following he also exchanged this rectory.

"*Thomas Bentley*, Chaplain, presented by the Abbot and Convent of Eynesham to the "Church of *Sulthorne* vacant by the resignation of *Thomas Preston*, by reason of an exchange of it "with the Church of *Fleterhergate* in the same diocese on the 5th of March, 1400."

1401. March 5. *Thomas Bentley*, Capellane.

"An exchange between *Sir John Whyteby*, Chaplain of the third Chantry in the parish "Church of *St James* at *Garlekhell*, and in the Chapel of *Gihalde* (*Guildhall*), in the city of *London*, "founded long ago by *John Whytrone*, Chaplain, and in his time citizen of *London*, for the souls of "Walter *Neel*, and *John de Oxenford*, and Master *Thomas Benteley*, Rector of the Church of "Sulthorne, on the 16th of October, 1404."

¹ "*John Denby*, Rector of *Chelvey*, Com. Berks, *Philip Mureys*, Rector of *Heyford Pontis*, Com. Oxon, &c., granted to *William Parsons*, Rector of *Sulthorn*, Com. Oxon, *Thomas Tiwe*, Capellane, &c., several meadows, pastures, &c., in the villages "and fields of *Crotebrugge* (now *Curbridge*) and *Carswell* in the

"parish of *Whitney*, in order to convey the said premises to "the Abbey of *Egnesham*. Dat. apud *Carswell* du Martis "proxime post Festum decollationis *S. Johannis Baptista*. Anno "regni Ricardi post conquestum nono" (*Kennett*, P. A. MCCCLXXXV.).

1404. Oct. 16. *John Whyteby* al^s *Whitby*, Capellane.

“An exchange between Sir John Whitby, on the presentation of the Abbot of Eynsham in the diocese of Lincoln and Alan Kyrketon, Rector of the Church of Bowerath in the diocese of London on the presentation of the Prior and Convent of Pryteuwell on the 21st April, 1415.”

1415. April 21. *Alan Kyrketon*.

Resigned the following month.

“Sir William Robyn, Chaplain, presented by the Abbot and Convent of Eynsham to the Church of Sulthorne vacant by the resignation of Alan Kyrketon on the 18th May 1415.”

1415. May 18. *William Robyn*, Capellane.

Resigned after one year's incumbency.

“Thomas Wyrsope, al^s *Chesterfield*, clerk, presented by ——— ? on the resignation of Sir William Robyn, on the 16th May, 1416.”

1416. May 16. *Thomas Wyrsope* al^s *Chesterfield*, priest.

Resigned next year.

“Sir John Pagrave de Offord, priest, presented by the Abbot and Convent of Eynsham to the Church of Suldron, and Sir Thomas Warshop alias *Chesterfield*, priest, presented by the Prior and Convent of St Frideswide to the Church of St Peter in the Bailey at Oxford, by reason of exchange on the 9th day of October, 1417.”

1417. Oct. 9. *John Pagrave de Offord*, priest.

Held the rectory five years, and then exchanged it.

“An exchange between William Carles, vicar of the Prebendal Church of Chapyng-farendon, in the diocese of Sarum, and John Pagrave alias Offord, Rector of the Church of Sulthorn, in the diocese of Lincoln, on the 16th of October, 1422.”

1422. Oct. 16. *William Carles*.

? *Thomas Nesshe*. Ob. 1462.

1462. May 23. *Robert Darey*. Ob. 1465.

1468. Feb. 26. *Walter Bate*, M.A.

(?) *Thomas Gage*. Ob. 1505.

1505. July 19. *Thomas Warne*, Clerk.

“Master Thomas Warne, clerk, presented by John Lykynde of Fifield for this one time by an alleged concession from the Abbot and Convent of Eynsham to the Church of Suldren, vacant by the death of Master Thomas Gage on the 19th of July, 1505.”

Buried in the chancel of the Parish Church, where a brass (lately restored) is inscribed,

“Of your charitie p̄y for the soul of Maister Thomas Warne late parson of this Church, which decesed XI die Aprilis, anno MV^cxiiij.”

On the slab is a full-length figure of a priest robed.

1514.¹ *John Barrat.*

Admitted Fellow of New College, Oxford, in 1506, from "Sowthorne." Fellow of Winchester in 1513. Ob. May 14, 1524.²

? *John Wyld.*

Resigned.

1522. Jan. 7. *Edmund Gledhill*, Chaplain. Ob. 1562.

As we read this long record of resignations and exchanges, we ask why and whence came they. In the course of two centuries (1305-1522) no less than twenty-five clergy were instituted to this rectory, and of these eleven are known to have resigned it by exchange or otherwise after a more or less brief incumbency. Now if we take a similar period in later times (1621-1835) we find that the rectors did not reach half that number, and that of the eleven then appointed each held his post until his death, without a single resignation or exchange. The question then arises, How is this difference to be accounted for? And the answer is self evident, that, whereas the later rectors possessed the profits of their benefices without disturbance, the earlier ones were harassed and impoverished by the exactions, which the patrons, the Abbey of Eynsham, continually made from their incomes, and thus were led to seek, whenever an opportunity occurred, a more remunerative office. And it may have been that those clergy who are styled clerk, or capellane, were only substitutes for an absent rector. These parochial chaplains were to a great extent, drawn from the lower classes of the people, and their emoluments and social position were not such as to render their office a desirable one.

The connection of this church with Eynsham Abbey, which had lasted through five centuries, suddenly ceased in consequence of the dissolution of that house. New patrons then presented a new order of clergy. There came no more Benedictine monks dressed in the habit of their order, white woollen cassocks and black gowns with hoods, but secular clergy, who, abandoning the mediæval dress of their forefathers, and the tonsure, wore the beard and moustache, and the academical dress of cassock and gown. The monks and friars had taken the three vows of absolute poverty, voluntary celibacy, and implicit obedience to the Superior of their convent. The parish priests, on the contrary, held with their benefices their private property; they long resisted the obligations of celibacy, and were rulers in spiritual things within their cures, subject only to the constitutional rule of the Bishop. The difference told at first unfavourably for the new order in public estimation.

Henry VIII, having seized the advowson, sold the next right of presentation to William Holte, Esq^e, then resident at Stoke Lyne, who presented.

1562. Nov. 18. *Edward Yonge.* Ob. 1571.

"On the 18th Nov. 1562 the Lord Archbishop admitted Edward Yonge, clerk to the Church "of Sulderne, vacant by the death of Edmund Gledhill, on the presentation of William Holte, "Esquire."

¹ The leaf in the Registers at Lincoln containing the date of this institution has been torn out.

² University Register.

During Mr. Yonge's incumbency the King sold the advowson.

1571. Nov. 28. *Lawrence Giles. Ob. 1592.*

Presented by Hugh Throckmorton of Souldern, Knight, and instituted by Archbishop Parker, the see of Oxford being still vacant.

1592. *Thomas Norbury.*

Presented by the Crown in consequence of the attainder of Francis Throckmorton.

A mandatory letter is extant from John, Bishop of Oxford, in the usual form declaring that Thomas Norburie has been presented to the Rectory of Soulderne, then void by the natural death of Lawrence Giles, late rector thereof, and directing him the said Norburie to be inducted, dated 28 April, 1592.

This is endorsed :

" 5 May, 1592. Thomas Norburie, clerk, was reallie inducted, and admitted into the Church
" of Soulderne in the presence of these persons hereunder written.

" Cuthbert Scott,
" James Balye,
" Richard (? illegible),
" John Medcroft,

Gabriel Chambers,
John Penn,
Thomas Dodwell,
Willyam Baynard,
Willyam Hogges."

At the close of Mr. Norbury's life, a claim was set up to the next presentation to this rectory, then expected to be soon vacant, on the ground that this lapsed to the Crown. The question was then referred to the Court of Chancery.

" Report of the Lord Chancellor, 12 October, 1619.

" According to the direcon of a Reference from yo^r Lo^p to vs subscribed in a petition pre-
" ferred by one Norbury against one Huffe wee have heard the seuerall allega^{co}ns on both sides,
" the said Huffe supposing the said church of Souldern to bee in lapps And that the late Queene
" by the Attaynder of ffrances Throckmorton was thereto entitled And in the lease of the said
" Advowson procured by the saide Norbury after the attaynder from the late Queene for divers
" yeres yett induringe there wanted words to passe the present vacancy, Vppon w^{ch} omission the
" said Huffe conceaving the same to bee in yo^r Lo^{pps} guifte procured late presenta^{co}n thereonto
" But on the other side it appeared onto vs by a faire deede that before ffrancis Throckmorton
" attaynted had anything to doe therein One Hugh Throckmorton then esquire and after knight in
" the thirteenth yere of the late queene from w^{ch} Hugh the said ffrancis pretended title by a later
" graunte And afterwards the church becam voide the said George Throckmorton presented the
" said Norbury who was thereupon instituted and inducted to the same and he hath euer since held
" and enioyed the said benefice and continued Incumbent there above six and twenty yeres and is
" a preachinge minister and resident there and hath wife and children and if he were throwne out
" in his oulde age hee would bee undone Soe that the said Norbury havinge both right and
" possession on his side wee are of opinion yow should deale very honorably to suffer him so to
" continue And for his further securitie and quiett in his ould age that he may receave from yo^r
" Lo^{pp} a Confirma^{co}n or new Presenta^{co}n and the presenta^{co}n lately procured by the said Huffe

" may be repealed and that yo^r Lo^p would vouchsafe to Remember the said Huffe in some other
 " thinge All which notwithstanding wee humblie submitte to yo^r Lo^{pp}^s further pleasure and
 " direction.

" Henry finch,
 " Tho: Crewe."

The right of presentation did lapse to the Crown, but not in favour of the former applicant.
 1622. Oct. 22. *Thomas Hardinge*, B.D.

Presented by the Crown. One of his early acts after appointment was to improve and enlarge the Rectory house. Here he resided through more than a quarter of a century, until, at the end of his days, he was, like his brethren, ejected from his home and charge.

Whatever may be thought of the treatment of the Royalist gentry by the Parliament, it was at least better than that of the Royalist clergy. The landowner might have to sell or mortgage part of his land, or to cut down the woods, which were the pride of his estate, in order to pay his fine; but after this his account with Parliament was closed, and he was free to enjoy what was left to him. The clergyman, noted either as a Royalist, or as attached to Episcopacy or the Prayer-book, was ejected from his living, and was thus deprived at one sweep of his means of livelihood. A fifth of his late income was, indeed, made payable to him by the incumbent who was intruded into his place, just as the same was to lay delinquents whose property was sequestered by the Committee of Sequestration; but this fifth was often grudgingly paid, and sometimes absolutely withheld.¹ Thus compelled in or about 1645 to leave his home, and to maintain himself and his family on straitened means, Mr. Hardinge continued his residence in the village for one year longer. A memorial-stone placed over his grave in the chancel of the Parish Church records his character and the leading events of his life.

" Here lies interred the body of the learned and reverend Thomas Hardinge, Batchelour of
 " Divinity, sometyme one of the Masters of Westminster School; commonly called the Grecian,
 " for his excellency in that tongue; Rector of Soulderne 26 years, and author of the great
 " 'Ecclesiastical Historie.'² His better monument he erected himself where his memorie and his
 " successors live together, in the faire parsonage house, where he was not only eminent for his holy
 " and pious conversation but for his hospitality and charitie to the poore. His epitaph is legible
 " in the large volumes of his works. He suffered his mortal change October 10th, 1648, in the
 " tyme of the great Revolution and change of Church and State. Living and dying himself in
 " the same constancy of obedience, a true sonne of the Church, and professor of the auncient
 " Catholique faith.

" Anima mea cum patribus."

Armorial bearings a dolphin naiant impaling a lion rampant (Stapleton).

In St. Mary's Church, Oxford, at the upper end of the chancel against the south wall, there is a black marble monument to the memory of his wife.³

" In hope of a glorious Resurrection here lyes interred the body of M^{rs} Joyce Hardinge, wife

¹ Gardiner's History of the Great Civil War, vol. III., chap. XLVI.

² "A judgment of Archbishop Ussher, Thomas Gataker, and
 " others commending a 'History of the Church' to the time of
 " Charles I., by the Rev. Thomas Hardinge, B.D., late Rector of

" Souldern." (The history seems never to have been printed,
 but Ussher and Gataker had read part of it.) Bodleian MS.,
 Tanner, 89, fol. 4.

³ Rawlinson's MSS., 397, in Bodleian Library.

“of Thomas Hardinge, Bachelor in Divinitie, and Rector of Souldern, in the Co. of Oxford, daughter of William Stapleton of Lythywood, in the Co. of Stafford, Esq^r, who was an eminent pattern and example of piety and charity towards the poore. She deceased on the 28th of May, in the year of her age 49, and in the year of our Lord Christ 1650.”

Over all Argent a dolphin naiant vert, finned against a lion ramp^t sable for Stapleton.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, PATRONS.

In the year 1622, Dr. John Williams, then Bishop of Lincoln, afterwards Archbishop of York, Lord Keeper of the great Seal, began to expend a large sum of money upon St. John's College, “the nurse of his hopeful breeding.”¹ He had already founded four scholarships in Westminster School (two for persons born within any county in Wales, and two for such as were born within the diocese of Lincoln, and, these failing, for any born within the liberties of Westminster). For the further advancement of these scholars he also founded four scholarships, and two fellowships, in St. John's College, Cambridge, directing that the Westminster scholars should, at the Michaelmas next following their election, be admitted to the scholarships at St. John's, and that from the latter two should be elected to the fellowships. For the endowment of these college scholarships and fellowships he gave lands in Ravely in Huntingdonshire (by estimation ninety-four acres), and £160, in money, to purchase other land, and the perpetual donation and patronage of four benefices.

Soldern, in Oxfordshire.	} Cures.
Freshwater, Isle of Wight.	
Aberdarron, in Carnarvonshire.	} Sinecures.
St. Florence, in Pembrokeshire.	

To these benefices the Fellows of his foundation were in due order to be presented, “if they would accept of the same, or be capable thereof,” at the time of the avoidance; but, these failing, any other Fellow might be chosen.²

The King's grant of these four benefices to Bishop Williams is dated Dec. 19, an. Reg. Jacob. 21 (1623). After the accession of King Charles, Bishop Williams had audience on Oct. 18, 1625, and among other petitions, he asked that His Majesty would “please to ratifie a grant,” made by his father of four advowsons to St. John's College, in Cambridge, whereof two he had bought with his money, and two the King gave him for the good of that society. The King said, “He would ratifie the grant, and give way to amend any errors in the form or in the passing.”²

1647. Oct. 18. *Thomas Hodges*, M.A.

Born at Oundle, in Northamptonshire. Matriculated from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, April 18, 1633. B.A. 1637, M.A. 1640.

By the violent proceedings of the Parliament he obtained an election to a fellowship at St. John's.³

The Earl of Manchester, by order dated June 11, 1644, directed that Thomas Hodges, and three others, who had been approved by the Assembly of Divines, should be admitted Fellows of

¹ The original deed is in the possession of St. John's College. A transcript is given in a Parliamentary Blue Book, being the 5th Report from the Select Committee on Education, etc., 1818, and reciting the Statutes of St. John's College, pp. 473-5.

² Hacket's Life of Archbishop Williams, part II., p. 25.

³ The number of Masters and Fellows at Cambridge ejected during the times of the troubles was about 200. Of these Walker says that the larger part were turned out at the end of 1643, and the beginning of 1644, principally for not taking the Covenant.

St. John's College. This was done June 18, 1644, when T. Hodges was admitted to a fellowship on Mr. Ashton's foundation, in place of Thomas Thornton, who refused the Covenant.

He held the following college offices :

Senior Dean, 1646; Lecturer, 1644; Examiner in Rhetoricis, 1646; Lector in Geometria, 1647; Taxor of the University, 1646-7. Intruded into Souldern, 1647.

"Oct. 22. Application for an order for D^r Aylett to institute and induct Thomas Hodges "to the Rectory of Souldern, Oxon. Annexed, Certificate from the Assembly of Divines that "Hodges has been approved for the cure. Oct. 20."¹

He was a zealous Presbyterian, but of a gentler spirit than many of that sect. His coming to Souldern was at once marked by the introduction of the Hour Glass into the Parish Church, and, a change of service, wherein preaching was exalted above prayer.

In the following year he took his B.D. degree (S.T.B., Coll. John, 1648).

In 1649 "the Minister of Souldern" was one of those in this neighbourhood who signed "a Letter to the Reverend Ministers of the Gospel within the Province of London, dated the 21 "of this instant January, wherein they cannot but present their utter dissent from all proceedings "against his Majesty's Crown and Life," printed in London, 1649.²

Eight of the Fellows of St. John's were from time to time elected to form, with the master, the governing body of the college, and were named seniors. Two years after his appointment to Souldern, Mr. Hodges was chosen one of these, but by a letter dated Souldern, 5 Dec., 1649, he declined this seniority, retaining his fellowship.

"By a deed dated 23 Nov., 1653, William Norbury, of Hanwell, in the County of Oxford, "in consideration of £40, conveyed the advowson of Souldern to Thomas Hodges, B.D., Rector of "Soulderne, *alias* Souldren."³

In the time of the Commonwealth, Mr. Hodges was elected one of the chaplains of All Soul's College, Oxford, but though he held this office, and lived many years in Oxfordshire, he was never incorporated into the university, or took any degree in divinity.

The Restoration of the Church and State appears to have been welcome to him, for he at once took his D.D. degree at Cambridge ("S.T.P., per literas regias, 1661"), and on Dec. 9, 1662, was canonically instituted to this rectory. But after the passing of the Act of Uniformity he resigned the latter, and presented the advowson to his college, adding a petition that his friend William Twyne, of that college, might be nominated as his successor.

"By a deed dated 3 Nov., 14 Chas. II. (1662), Thomas Hodges, Rector of Soulderne, in "consideration of his great and true respect to piety and learning, and particularly to St John's "Colledge, conveys the advowson of Soulderne to the Colledge."³

Mr. Hodges then left Souldern, and retired to Wokingham (then spelt Okingham) in Berks, where he became Chaplain of the Hospital (Lucas's Hospital), a small hospitium outside the town. The building of this hospital was finished in 1665, and Mr. Hodges was its second master. A record of his taking the twofold oath which had to precede his entering upon the mastership, is extant :

¹ Calendar of the House of Lords MSS. in the VIth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical MSS., p. 203.

² See History of Fringford, p. 36.

³ Among the records at St John's College.

" January 15th, 1669-70.

" These are to testify that Thomas Hodges Cleark did take the Oath of Supremacy required
" by the Statute of the first of Queen Elizabeth the first chapter before me one of the Justices of the
" County of Berks the day and year above written.

" 15 Jan. 1669.

" The above named Thomas Hodges took the oath of Mr. of the Hospital of Wokingham
" according to the order of the house before mee.

" ROBERT RAWORTH."¹

" 1687
" Ben Moody } Mr. Thomas Hodges Minister of y^e Hospitall was buried February y^e 6th, 1687."²
" Minister }

During his residence at Souldern he published :

1. " The Hoary Head Crowned," a sermon preached at Brackley, " at the funeral of Fran.
" Walbank, a very aged and religious matron," 1654.

2. A Treatise concerning Prayer, containing particularly an apology for the Lord's Prayer,
Lond. 1656.

3. A Scripture Catechisme towards the confutation of sundry errors of the present time,
Lond. 1658, Oct.

4. A cordial against the fear of death, preached before the University of Oxford on
Heb. II. v. 15, Oxon, 1659.

Subsequently he published several sermons.

" The Creatures' goodness as they came out of God's hands, and the good man's mercy to
" the brute creation " in 2 sermons on Gen. I. v. 31 (4^o 1675), preached at least twice.

On Prov. XX. v. 10 (4^o 1675).

Ps. XXXIX. v. 5, The vanity of man at his best Estate (4^o 1676).

St. Luke XVI. vv. 30, 31, The vanity of Dives' desire.

St. Matt. X. v. 13, The duty of Ministers (4^o 1685).

Job XI. vv. 12, 13, preached before the Sons of the Clergy Corporation.³

The following letter (addressed to "the Rev^d. Mr. Jeffery Shaw, Rector of Soldern near
" Aynho, by Winslow bag") describes the complications which arose about the advowson.

" Octob. 26, 1704.

" Dearest Sr,

" Yo^{rs} last found me just returned to the Colledge, and I hoped to have sent you my
" thanks for it sooner with an accompt of the Advowson of Soldern out of the Treasury, but the
" Bursar could not gett time to goe up till Monday last, and then I tooke out a Box of Writings
" relating to the Advowson. Upon perusall I found none of Bp. Williams's there, but onely those
" that we have from Mr. Hodges, but I hope you may have light enough from them to satisfy y^r
" enquiry and if not 'twill be easy to consult Bp. Williams's when I returne these. The original
" Title was in Hugh Throckmorton of Soldern, Gent., from whom the two other titles are derived,
" the one of the Crown procured for us by Bp. Williams, the other that which Mr. Hodges bought

¹ He was the surviving executor of H. Lucas, the founder of the hospital.

² Register of All Saints' Church, Wokingham.

³ Cooke's Historical Register of Authors of Sermons published since the Restoration to the present time, 1783. See also A. Wood's Fasti; Calamy's Abridgment, vol. I., p. 335 (Ed. 1702).

" and gave the Coll. The title of the Crown is from the attainder of Francis Throckmorton in
 " 2. Eliz. time (abt A. 1584) who either had or was pretended to have a grant of the advowson from
 " Hugh Throckmorton. The other title is grounded upon a deed of sale (which is the first of the
 " Writings dated May 22, 13 Eliz. (A. 1572) wherein Hugh Throckmorton for £100 and 100 sheep
 " makes over the advowson to George Throckmorton of Fulbrooke in Bucks, Esq^e, afterwards
 " S^r George. A. 1592 George Throckmorton upon the death of Lawrence Giles presents one Tho.
 " Norbury whose institution and mandate of induction under the Bishop's Seal are among the
 " writings but it appears (from the case between this Norbury and Dan. Huffle mentioned below)
 " that Norbury took out a lease from the Queen of the advowson ad corroborandum. However he
 " thought his title so good that in the ninth of K. James (A. 1611) he gave £200 to S^r George
 " Throckmorton for the advowson and a cottage and 2 acres of land in Soldern, and common
 " of pasture for one cow as appears by the deed of sale whereby S^r George for £200 p^d by Tho^s.
 " Norbury sen^r Incumbent makes over the advowson to Tho. Norbury jun^r his son and the cottage
 " and land to Tho. Norbury sen^r the father and S^r George and his Lady confirme the sale by
 " passing a fine. About the year 1619 one Daniel Huffle gott the Broad Seale from the Chancellor
 " for the living after Mr. Norbury had been in possession 25 yeares as appears by an Award made
 " by S^r Hen. Finch serj. at law and S^r Tho. Crewe (upon a reference of the cause from the Lord
 " Chancellor to them). In the award they sett forth that Huffle supposed that the Church was in
 " lapse and the late Qn was entitled thereto by the attainder of Francis Throckmorton and that in
 " Norbury's lease from the Queene there wanted words to passe the present vacancy, but they
 " adjudge the right to be in Norbury upon account of the deed of sale from Hugh Throckmorton to
 " George Throckmorton of prior date to the grant pretended from the said Hugh to Francis
 " Throckmorton and desire the L^d Chancell^r to suffer Norbury to continue in possession and that
 " he may have from his Lordship a confirmation or new p^rsenta^on, and that Huffle's presentation
 " may be vacated. There is nothing further that I find in the Writings above, except that S^r
 " George's deed of sale has no endorsement, that it was shewed A. 1638 to John Dodwell (who had
 " beene witnesse at the sealing of it) upon a suite between Witton Harding Clerk Plaint. and
 " Weedon and other Defend^s.

" A. 1658 Willm Norbury of Hanwell Gent. (Brother or Son of Tho. Norbury jun^r deceased)
 " by a deed of sale for £20 p^d in hand, and £20 secured to be p^d grant the advowson to Mr. Hodges,
 " and covenants that he and his wife Martha shall passe a fine within ten years if required.

" Jan. 22, 1662, 14 Car. 2 Mr. Hodges by a writing signed and sealed confers the advowson
 " upon the Colledge. Mr. Hodges never got a fine passed by Mr. Norbury or his wife Martha
 " within the ten years, and she tho after the 10 years were lapsed promised before two witnesses to
 " pass a fine when required, yett when all things were prepared refused to doe it, as appears by a
 " letter of D^r. John O— to D^r. Morton in answer to the case putt by D^r. Morton, whether the
 " Colledge's title be not confirmed by 3 presentations (of Mr. Hodges, Mr. Twyne, and Mr.
 " Turner) without the fine passed by her, and whether she might be compelled to passe it) though
 " the 10 years were expired) by virtue of her promise. S^r John answers that y^e 3 presentations
 " will not void her right to a third turne, and her promise is not ground enough for an action to
 " compell her to acknowledge a fine, but he thought she will not find it worth her while to contest
 " it, because she will be forced to sue out her Writt of Dower to entitle her to her thirds, and then
 " to bring her Quare impedit for her third turne when it happens, so that it will signify little to her.
 " The date of S^r John's letter is July 14, 1674, at which time I presume Mr. Turner had some

“trouble with the Widow, and possibly this may be the ground upon which a title is pretended
 “now, for, except it be for this omission, the Advowson seems to be effectually secured to the Coll.
 “from the Crowne by Bp. Williams from Sr G. Throckmorton by Mr. Hodges’ purchase from
 “Mr. Norbury.

“Deare Sr, I wish this account may doe you any service and pray favor me with any
 “further enquiry you have to make, &c. &c.

“Dearest Sr,

“Yr most obliged humble servt,

“THO. BROWNE.

“Mr. Bursar and yr other

“friends present their Services.”

At both the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge provision was made from the earliest times for students of humble birth or condition, whose parents were below the then well-defined class of gentlemen. They obtained admission to all the privileges of the University at lower charges, and on a lower scale of living. Most of the sons of the parochial clergy were entered on this footing, and from this class the College Fellowships were mainly filled. These students were called Servitors at Oxford and Sizars at Cambridge, as they were expected to perform various duties, which would now be considered menial, but which in the XVIth century were commonly accepted as proper for one of lower degree to perform for his betters, and were in no way looked upon as degrading. They waited not only on the College authorities, or their tutors, but also on their fellow students. It was not unusual for the son of an esquire or a knight to bring up with him to College a humble companion from his own home, who thus obtained the benefits of the University at his young master’s cost, and who repaid his obligation by his services. The Servitors or Sizars had no regular allowance. After waiting on their masters at dinner or supper they made their meal on the broken meat that was left.¹ To this class of students some of the Rectors of Souldern belonged, a class of able and high-minded clergymen now too rapidly becoming extinct—the class of men who took high degrees in their University, became in due time Fellows of Colleges, and Priests of the Church, filled the chief offices in their Colleges and University, and after many years of active academical work retired to a country living.

1663. March 30. *William Twyne*,

of Walton, Surrey, son of Anthony T., deceased; School, Shrewsbury (Mr. Challenor); admitted Pensioner 26 March, 1646, age 19; Foundress’ Scholar, Nov. 6, 1646; admitted Fellow on Foundress’ Foundation, 3 Ap., 1650; admitted Senior Fellow, 7 May, 1660; Junior Dean, 1658-60; Lector Græcus in Aulâ, 1661. Presented to Souldern, March 10, 1663.

“Tho. Hodges, B.D., Rector of Souldern, Com. Oxon., present. a Coll. Div. Evang. Cantab.
 “post 1660. Act uniform resign ad Guiel. Twyne, Rector Souldern.”²

“W^m Twyne used the Surplice and his black hood but 3 times a year, when he administered
 “the Sacrament. This was told me by Mr. Bower, Senr.”³

Buried in the chancel of the Parish Church.

“Here lyeth the body of Mr. William Twyne for divers yeares fellow of St. John’s College,
 “Cambridge, Bachelour in Divinity, and late Rector of this Church, whose exemplar and con-
 “versation in both places, for solid learning and true piety deservedly recommends him to the

¹ *Registrum Oriense*, by C. L. Shadwell, M.A., 1893, vol. I.

² Entry in a Book of Memoranda in the parish chest.

³ Rawlinson’s MS.

"memory of others. He departed this life the last day of January 1665-6, and in the 41st year of his age."¹

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints.—Ps. 116, ver. 15."

1666. April 4. *Bryan Turner*, B.D.,
s. of William T., farmer, of Melling (near Ormskirk), Lancashire; born at Melling; School, Sedberg (Mr. Jackson); admitted sizar 16 Oct., 1650, age 16; elected scholar on Hebblethwaite's foundation, 6 Nov., 1651; fellow on April 4, 1655; afterwards tutor; and preacher, 6 July, 1663.
"Brian Turner electus concionator in Festo S. Michaelis ex tenore mandati regii."

He was chaplain to the Earl of Carlisle, and in the year of his election as college preacher he was called abroad.

"July 4, 1663.

"Brian Turner to Williamson. Forgot to request that his mandatory letters may contain
"a clause excusing the performance of any college or university exercise required during his
"absence."

"July 8, 1663.

"The King to the Master and Fellows of St. John's College, Cambridge. Requests them to
"dispense with the absence of Brian Turner, Fellow of their College, who is in attendance on the
"Earl of Carlisle, Ambassador Extraordinary to Russia, still allowing him the profits of his fellow-
"ship and admitting College preacher, although his catechizing is only partly performed."¹

Before Mr. Turner came to Souldern he had been Rector of St. Faith's Church near St. Paul's, where he continued until the great fire of London in 1666.² After coming into residence at Souldern he resigned his fellowship and married.

"Elizabetha Turner Filia Bryani et Sarah baptiz. die dominico Julii 24, 1670."

His wife died fourteen years later.

"Sarah Turner sepult. Oct. 25, 1681."²

A new handwriting then appears in the Church Registers for the next eight years, and it seems likely that Mr. Turner went to reside in Oxford, for in the year after his wife's death he took his D.D. degree there. In 1684 he gave a benefaction of £100 to his college. His handwriting reappears at Souldern in 1692. In the meanwhile he married a second time.

He seems to have entertained a belief in horoscopes, the vain superstition of astrological predictions and aspects. These are founded on the positions or appearances which the sun, moon, and planets have relatively to each other at the moment of a person's birth, or at some other critical period of his life, and are supposed to indicate his future destinies. It was, therefore, thought necessary to record with strict accuracy the exact moment of a child's birth.

"Benjamin Turner filius Bryani et Janæ uxoris ejus, natus die dominico ad horam octavam
"præmeridianam Feb. 18; Renatus sacro Baptismate sequente die dominico Feb. 25 169 $\frac{3}{4}$."

"Bryanus Turner filius Bryani et Janæ uxoris ejus natus die dominico post horam secundam
"ante-lucanam [sirgiparti?] Augusti nono; Renatus sacro fonte Baptismatis sequente die dominico
"mensis Augusti-16-1696."

"Isaacus }
"Willhilmus } Turner gemelli filii Bryani & Janæ uxoris ejus nati post horam septimam

¹ Calendar of State Papers, 1663-4, pp. 193, 198.

² Souldern Church Registers.

"pomeridianam [*follow nearly three lines of erasure, showing only the word octavam*] die Augusti tertio, renati sacro baptisinate ejusdem mensis die septimo. Anno. 1697."¹

Mr. Turner had before him the prospect of longevity, for his mother had lived more than a century of years.

"Jane Turner vidua annum agens supra centissimum obiit Aug. 1st sepult Aug. 2, 1693, anno "vicesimo tertio post Gulielmū maritum."

But four years after his mother's death he died of a short and sudden illness. In 1697 he was nominated to the archdeaconry of Hereford, but he never lived to take the office. His last entry in the Souldern Registers in his usual clear handwriting was on December 26, 1697. But before two months were past the parish clerk wrote in a rough hand among the burials:

"Bryan Turner, Rector of this place, Feb. 22, 1697,"

and friends placed a marble slab at the entrance into the chancel of the Parish Church inscribed:

"Hic jacet Bryanus Turner, S.T.P., e com. Lancast. oriundus, Coll. St. John apud Cantab. socius, hujus ecclesiæ annis XXX Rector, eccl. Cath. Hereford canonicus, ejusdem demum archidiaconus nominatus Qui vitam et munera summa laude gessit. Obiit Feb. xx MDCXCVIJ, anno ætatatis LXV."

His published works were a small tract entitled:

"De primi peccati introitu; sive de lapsu Angelorum et hominum tentamene, quo ratio reddatur amico postulanti" (Lond. 1691 qu.).

Two sermons preached before the Lord Mayor of London:

(1) 1 Tim. i. v. 7 (4^o, 1677).

(2) Rev. xix. v. 10. "Testimonium Jesu," or Demonstration of the Spirit for the confirmation of Christian Faith and conviction of all infidelity (1681, 4to).

The name of "A. Goodwin, Curate" appears in 1695.

1698. July 15. *Geoffrey Shaw*, B.D., of Stainmore, Westmoreland, son of George S., deceased; School, Appleby; admitted Sizar 29 May, 1676, age 18; B.A., 1679; M.A., 1683; admitted Fellow on Foundress' Foundation 30 March, 1680; elected Sacrist, Feb., 169½; Junior Dean, 1694-8; Examiner in Mathematics, 1682; Reader in Geometry, 1684; Junior Preacher of the University, 1688-90; B.D., 1681.

He came into residence at Souldern in the year following his institution, when his handwriting first appears in the Church Registers. He continued a bachelor, and, after a short incumbency of nine years, died suddenly in middle life, at the age of 48 years. He was buried, on the day following his death, close to the spot in the church where he fell.

"Gal Shaw Rect^r sepult Nov. 18, 1706."

"Here lies the body of Jeffery Shaw, B.D., Rector of this Church, who fell down dead, while he was reading divine service therein on Sunday Nov. 17th, 1706."

"Blessed is that servant, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing."

The old folio Bible, from which he was reading, is still preserved, and a note has been made in it at the text where he ceased.

John Cooper was curate from 1703 until the end of Mr. Shaw's incumbency.

¹ In the chancel on a white freestone gravestone: "Hic jacet "hujusce Ecclesiæ Rectoris, Nat X. Aug., MDCXCVII; Isaack, "fratres gemelli Isaack et Willielmus, filii Briani Turner, S.T.P., "XXI. Aug., obiit MDCXCVII; Wilh., XXVII. Aug."

"An Account of the Apparition of Master Nailor,¹ a former Fellow of St. John's College, to Master Shaw, also formerly a Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and afterwards Rector (by presentation of the said College) of Souldern St. Mary, Oxon.

"From a manuscript of the Rev. Richard Chambre, vicar of Loppington in Shropshire:

"About the end of last summer, 1706, Mr. Grove, the Public Registrar of the University of Cambridge, was in the Country, at a small township, near Banbury, in Oxfordshire, with his old College friend Mr. Shaw, lately Fellow of St. John's, and who was presented by the College, to the Rectory, where he resided. While Mr. Grove tarried with him, which was about four or five days, Shaw told him this remarkable story. Namely that some days before, as he was sitting in his study, late at night, and while he was smoking tobacco and reading, the Spectre of his old Companion, Master Nailor, who died about 5 years ago, in St. John's College, came into the room, habited in a gown and cassock, and exactly in the same manner, as he used to appear in the College, when he was alive. Mr. Shaw remembered the figure well, and was, therefore, much surprised. But the Spectre took a chair, and sitting down close to him, bid him not be afraid, for he came to acquaint him with something which nearly concerned him.

"So, entering into discourse, the Spectre told him, that their friend, Mr. Orchard, was to die very suddenly, and that he (Shaw) himself should die soon after him, and that he, therefore, came to forewarn him, that he might prepare himself accordingly. After this they talked of many other things, for their conference lasted about two hours; and amongst the rest Mr. Shaw asked him, if one might form some sort of notion of the other world, from anything that one sees in this? He answered 'No,' without giving any further satisfaction. Upon this, Mr. Shaw said, 'How is it with you?' His answer was, 'I am very well and happy.' Whereupon Mr. Shaw asked him further, 'Whether any of his old acquaintance were with him.' His answer was, 'that there was not one of them;' which answer, Mr. Shaw said, as distinctly stated by Mr. Registrar Grove, '*struck him to the heart.*'

"At last, after two hours' conference together, the Spectre took his leave. And Mr. Shaw desiring him to stay longer, he told him, that he could not, for he had only three days allotted 'him, to be absent,' and they were almost expired. Mr. Shaw desired that he might see him 'at least once more before his own Death.' But he told him, 'It could not be,' and so left him. After this, Shaw walked about the room, a considerable time, musing upon what had happened.

"Mr. Grove is a person of undoubted credit, who tells this story, and which is the greatest confirmation of it that can be desired is, that he told it several times in the College, and mentioned it to Dr. Balderston, Master of Emmanuel College, Vice Chancellor of the University, before Mr. Shaw died—who fell down dead in his Desk while reading the second lesson of Even-song 1 Tim. vi. on Sunday November 17th, 1706.

"Mr. Orchard, the other party named to Shaw by the Spectre, died suddenly in his Chair, while his bedmaker was gone to fetch his Commons for supper. This strange fact is confirmed by two Country gentlemen, of Mr. Shaw's acquaintance, to whom he had likewise

¹ Mr. Naylor was Vicar of Enstone, in this county. He died in 1704, and was buried on July 1st in that year. On a corner buttress of the church porch there is a small diamond-shaped white marble slab to his memory, bearing an inscription of which the following is a translation: "Near this spot is deposited John

"Naylor, Master of Arts, Fellow of University College, and "Vicar of this Church. He died June 29th, A.D. 1704, in "the 49th year of his age, grievously dispirited (*abjectus*) in the "house of the Lord" (See Jordan's History of Enstone, pp. 191, 192).

“communicated it, and in truth it met with such universal credit here, that I have found very few, who make scruple of believing it. Moreover, it is remarkable that Mr. Shaw himself was heretofore a notedly avowed enemy to the belief of Apparitions, and used always in Company to dispute against them.”

A pamphlet, named “The Seldon Ghost,” was published “in 1707, Licensed according to order, London. Printed by D. Brown in Fetter Lane.” It consists of two pages only, the title-page being a summary of its contents. The last two pages give the following letter, and alone contain any matter of importance.¹

Part of a letter from Mr. Edward Walter, Fellow of St. John’s College, Cambridge, to a friend in the country; dated December 6th, 1706 :

“I should scarce have mentioned anything of the matter on my own account, but since you have given yourself the trouble of an enquiry, I am, I think, obliged in friendship to relate all that I know of the matter, and that I do the more willingly because I can so soon produce my authority.

“Mr. Shaw, to whom the apparition appeared, was Rector of Soldern, or Souldern, in Oxfordshire, late of St. John’s College, [Cambridge], aforesaid, on whom Mr. Grove, his old fellow-collegiate, called July last, in his journey to the west, where he staid a day or two and promised to see him again in his return, which he did, and staid three days with him. In that time, one night after supper, Mr. Shaw told him that there happened a passage which he could not conceal from him, as being an intimate friend, and one to whom this transaction might have something more relation to than another man. He proceeded therefore and told him that about a week before that time, viz., July 28th, 1706, as he was smoking and reading in his study, about 11 or 12 at night, there came to him the apparition of Mr. Naylor, formerly fellow of the said College and dead some years ago, a friend of Mr. Shaw’s, in the same garb he used to be in, with his hands clasped before him. Mr. Shaw, not being much surprized, asked him how he did, and desired him to sit down, which Mr. Naylor did. They both sat there a considerable time, and entertained one another with various discourses. Mr. Shaw then asked after what manner they lived in the separate state? He answered, ‘Far different from what they do here, but that he was very well.’ He enquired farther whether there was any of their old acquaintance in that place where he was? He answered, ‘No! not one;’ and then proceeded and told him that one of their old friends, naming Mr. Orchard, should die quickly, and that he himself (Mr. Shaw) should not be long after. There was mention of several people’s names, but who they were or upon what occasion Mr. Grove cannot or will not tell. Mr. Shaw then asked him whether he would not visit him again before that time. He answered, no, he could not; he had but three days allowed him, and farther he could not go. Mr. Shaw said, ‘Fiat voluntas Domini,’ and the apparition left him.

“This is word for word as Mr. Shaw told Mr. Grove, and Mr. Grove told me.

“What surprized Mr. Grove was, that as he had, in his journey homewards, occasion to ride through Clopton or Claxton, he called upon Mr. Clark, fellow of our College aforesaid, and curate there, when enquiring after College news, Mr. Clark told him Arthur Orchard died that week, August 6th, 1706, which very much shocked Mr. Grove, and brought to his mind the story

¹ This is now a scarce pamphlet. A copy of it was purchased a few years ago at a great cost by Mr. G. Dew of Lower Heyford, in whose possession it is.

"of Mr. Shaw afresh. About three weeks ago Mr. Shaw died of an apoplexy, in the desk, of the same distemper poor Arthur Orchard died of. Since this strange completion of matters Mr. Grove has told this relation, and stands to the truth of it, and that which confirms the narrative is, that he told the same to Dr. Baldiston, the present Vice-Chancellor, and Master of Emanuel College, about a week before Mr. Shaw's death, and when he came to the College he was no way surprised as others were. What fartherers my belief of its being a true vision, and not a dream, is Mr. Grove's incredulity of stories of this nature. Considering them both as men of learning and integrity, the one would not first have declared nor the other have spread the same were not the matter itself serious and real.

"Yours, etc.,

"EDWARD WALTER."

There is also another letter, from "the Rev. J. Hughes to the Rev. Mr. Borariker," virtually giving the same narrative. And in an extract from a letter "from the Rev. Mr. Turner to Mr. Bonwicke," we read:—"There is a circumstance relating to the story of this apparition which adds great confirmation to it. There is one, Mr. Cartwright, a member of Parliament, a man of good credit and integrity, an intimate friend of Mr. Shaw's, who told the same story with Dr. Grove's (which he had from Mr. Shaw at the Archbishop of Canterbury's table), but he says further that Mr. Shaw told him of some great revolutions in the State, which he will not discover, being either obliged to silence by Mr. Shaw, or concealing upon some prudent and politic reasons." These letters are dated November, 1706, and MSS. copies are in the possession of the writers of these *Notes*.¹

1707. April 25. *Matthew Pearson, D.D.*

Born at Richmond, Yorkshire, s. of Edward P., surgeon; School, Richmond (Mr. Parvin), admitted sizar at St. John's Coll., 28 June, 1683, age 17; Fellow on Foundress' foundation, 6 April, 1688; Senior Dean, 1702-7; B.A. 1686; S.T.B. and S.T.P. per literas regias, 1703.

He was evidently non-resident. His name nowhere appears in the Church Registers, which throughout his incumbency were carelessly kept, and in many different handwritings. From May, 1715 until August, 1716 the name of one parent only is given in the Register of Baptisms; and again in 1719. Greater carefulness is resumed together with the Latin tongue two years later. Dr. Pearson is said to have died at Cambridge.

Curates { Nathaniel Goodwin, 1715-16.
 { E. Walker, 1732.

1735. Nov. 15. *John Russell, B.D.*

Born at Thrapstone, Northamptonshire; s. of John R., deceased; School, Northampton (Mr. Styles); admitted Pensioner at St. John's Coll., 18 July, 1711, age 18; scholar on Cardinal Morton's foundation, 6 Nov., 1711; Fellow on Foundress' foundation, 1 April, 1718; Senior Fellow, 19 Dec., 1734; Senior Bursar, 1733-5; B.A., 1716; M.A., 1719; B.D., 1729.

He came into residence at Souldern in the year after his institution, his first entry in the Church Registers being on January 9, 1736. After vacating his Fellowship he married. Two sons

¹ From Nicholl's *Illustrations of the Literary History of the XVIIIth century* (1822), vol. IV., p. 119. See "Sermon on prayer," by William Offley, Rector of Middleton Stoney (4to, "the death of the Rev. Geoffrey Shaw, Rector of Soulderne, 1707).

of his were baptized at Souldern in 1739 and 1740, and a daughter in 1742. He continued his residence throughout his long incumbency, and some marks of his character are seen in the extremely careful and neat way in which the entries in the Church Registers are made by him without a single intermission. His clear and bold handwriting ceases after February, 1771.

"March 8, 1772. Rev^d. John Russell, Rector of this parish, was buried."

A memorial was placed over his grave in the Chancel.

"M. S.

"Reverendi viri Joannis Russell, S.T.B.,

"Divi Joan Evangel. apud Cantab. Socii

"Dein hujus parochiæ annos ultra 36 rectoris

"qui obiit 5^o die mensis Martii } salutis 1772.

"año } ætatis 79.

"Juxta jacet

"Elizabetha, J. R. uxor quæ obiit die 26^o m. Martii

"anno { salutis 1791.
 { ætatis 84."

At this vacancy the College made the following arrangements about the next presentation to this Rectory, as recorded in the Master's note book :

"11 May, 1772. Mr. Ashby being called upon to give his answer concerning the living of Soulderne, and desiring further time it was agreed to allow him to the 23rd of this month, and to allow Mr. Metcalfe till the 8th of June; Mr. Jenkin to the 22nd of June, and Mr. Horseman to the 6th of July.

"23 June, 1772. Mr. Jenkin having answered that he shall probably accept the living of Soulderne, and that he is endeavouring to effect an exchange for that purpose, agreed to allow him till the 2nd of July to give his final answer.

"2 July, 1772. Agreed to elect Mr. Jenkin into the Rectory of Soulderne.

"6 July, 1772. Whereas Mr. Jenkin has altered his determination concerning the living of Soulderne and has declined the acceptance of it before the presentation is sealed, it is agreed to elect Mr. Horseman into the said Rectory.

"Agreed that Mr. Jenkin be informed by his sponsor that his irresolution with respect to the living of Soulderne has been improper, and might have been very inconvenient to the College, and that a more speedy and certain answer will be required of him on any future occasion."¹

1772. July 31. *John Horseman*, B.D.

Born at Greatham, Durham; s. of James H., clericus; educated by his father; admitted Sizar at St. John's Coll., 2 July, 1751, age 17; Fellow on Foundress' foundation, 25 March, 1757; Examiner in Rhetoricâ, 1760; Lector in Arithmeticâ, 1761; B.A., 1755; M.A., 1758; B.D., 1776.

Like his predecessors he kept his year of grace at Cambridge, and came to Souldern in the year following his institution (his handwriting in the Registers first appearing in April, 1773), and married. Three sons of his were baptized in 1774-75-78, of whom the eldest took Holy Orders, and occasionally officiated at Souldern in 1799 and 1801. He was an active and good man of

¹ Baker's History of St. John's Coll.

business, but he employed himself more in secular and extra-parochial matters than in the due oversight of his parish. His reputation stood high as a land-valuer, and he was therefore largely employed as an Inclosure Commissioner at a time when many of the neighbouring parishes were being remodelled. His name is met with in the Inclosure acts and awards of Westcott and Middle Barton, 1796; Dun's Tew, 1794, Stoke Lyne and Fewcot in the same year; Wigginton, 1796; Lower Heyford, 1802, and many other Oxfordshire parishes; and Aynhoe, 1793. He constantly undertook occasional services in other neighbouring churches, and had besides the charge of Hardwick in 1781-84. But the act which has handed down his name with disfavour and shame is his destruction of the Chancel of the Parish Church, and the erection in its stead of the present unsightly mean structure. He died June 25, 1806, aged 73, his wife Ursula having predeceased him on April 19, 1803. There is a tablet to their memory in the Chancel.

1806. Dec. 6. *Robert Jones*, B.D.

A native of Derbyshire; no parentage given; admitted Pensioner at St. John's Coll., 8 June, 1787; Fellow on Gwyne's foundation, 12 April, 1791; Lector Matutinus, 1802; Lector Mathematicus, 1805; University Proctor, 1800-1; B.A., 1791; M.A., 1794; B.D., 1802.

After his institution to this rectory he set about a repair and enlargement of the rectory house, and on this account obtained a license for non-residence.

"We Charles Bishop of Oxford hereby license you Robert Jones Rector of Souldern to be absent from your Benefice of Souldern till the twenty-fifth day of March now next on account of the unfitness of the Parsonage House the same being in a state of repair.

"Given under our hand this first day of December in the year of our Lord, 1808.

"CHAS. OXFORD.

"The above was publicly read at my Visitation held at Bicester this sixth day of June, 1809.

"PHINEAS PETT, Archdeacon."

During this absence, 1807-9, *W. H. Clerke* was curate in charge of the parish.

The first evidence of Mr. Jones's residence was at a vestry held April 23, 1810, when he was present, and appointed his churchwarden. From that time he was regularly resident during twelve years, until 1822, when on June 22nd in that year he obtained a second license for non-residence, "a yearly salary of £55 with the use of the Parsonage House, and an allowanace of £6 10s towards payment of the assessed taxes," being assigned to his curate, *Francis Clerke*, M.A., Fellow of All Soul's College, Oxford. The license was allowed to have a large margin, for Mr. Clerke remained in charge of the parish until 1826, when he was succeeded by another Fellow of All Soul's College for a year, *J. A. Walpole*, B.A. Mr. Jones was then again resident for a short time, but in 1833 he had a third license of non-residence allowed him. *Mr. W. Cotton Risley*, Fellow of New College, Oxford, was at that time curate, having a "yearly stipend of £70 with the surplice fees and the use of the Glebe house (wherein he resides) with garden and offices," and he continued his charge until Mr. Jones's death.

Mr. Jones was an intimate friend of the poet Wordsworth, who was a frequent guest at his house, and has described, in one of his "Poems of Sentiment and Reflection," the many-sided character of his friend.

"A CHARACTER.

"I marvel how Nature could ever find space
 "For so many strange contrasts in one human face ;
 "There's thought, and no thought, and there's paleness and bloom,
 "And bustle and sluggishness, pleasure and gloom.
 "There's weakness and strength both redundant and vain,
 "Such strength as, if ever affliction and pain
 "Could pierce through a temper that's soft to disease,
 "Would be rational peace—a philosopher's ease.
 "There's indifference, alike when he fails or succeeds,
 "And attention full ten times as much as there needs ;
 "Pride where there's no envy, there's so much of joy ;
 "And mildness, and spirit both forward and coy.
 "There's freedom, and sometimes a diffident stare
 "Of shame scarcely seeming to know that she's there,
 "There's virtue, the title it surely may claim,
 "Yet wants heaven knows what to be worthy the name.
 "This picture from Nature may seem to depart,
 "Yet the man would at once run away with your heart ;
 "And I for five centuries right gladly would be
 "Such an odd, such a kind happy creature, as he."

In 1802 they went abroad together, and on the road leading from Calais to Ardres on August 7 in that year the poet composed the third of his "Sonnets dedicated to Liberty."

"Jones, as from Calais southwards you and I
 "Went pacing side by side this public way,
 "Streamed with the pomp of a too credulous day,¹
 "When Faith was pledged to new-born liberty."

Mr. Jones died on April 3, 1835, at Plas yn Llan in Denbighshire.²

"This excellent person" (adds the poet) "one of my earliest and dearest friends, died in the year 1835. We were undergraduates together of the same year at the same college, and companions on many a delightful ramble through his own romantic country of North Wales. Much of the latter part of his life he passed in comparative solitude, which I know was often cheered by remembrance of our youthful adventures, and of the beautiful regions which at home and abroad we had visited together. Our long friendship was never subject to a moment's interruption, and while revising these volumes for the last time, I have been so often reminded of my loss with a not displeasing sadness that I trust the reader will excuse the passing mention of a man, who well deserves from me something more than so brief a notice. Let me only add that during the middle part of his life, he resided many years (as Incumbent of the Living) at a Parsonage in Oxfordshire, which is the subject of one of the 'Miscellaneous Sonnets.'"

1835. Aug. 20. *Laurence Stephenson*, D.D.

Born at Beverley, Yorkshire; parentage not given; educated at the Grammar School in that town; carrying away a school scholarship was admitted a Sizar at St. John's Coll., 27 Jan., 1819, age 17; Allett's Exhibitioner, Midsummer, 1822; Fellow on Lady Rokeby's Foundation, 14 March, 1826; Sacrista, 1829-30; Junior Dean, 1834-36; B.A., 1823; M.A., 1826; B.D., 1833; D.D., 1844.

"Married on Tuesday, 23 Aug., 1836, at St. Sepulchre's Church, by the Rev. S. Lachels of Christ's Coll., to Anne, 2nd daughter of Mr. Robert Anderson of Cambridge."³

¹ July 14th, 1790.

² *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1835, II., 666.

³ *Cambridge Chronicle*, 26th Aug., 1836.

During the first fifteen years of his residence at Souldern he took private pupils. He was of the old Evangelical party, a zealous advocate of that school of thought, and holding a recognised position as such among the clergy of this deanery.

It is too common nowadays to charge the clergy and squires of former times with a lack of interest in promoting the temporal welfare of the labouring classes, but it should be remembered that in most places they were the real pioneers of most of those instrumentalities whereby the homes and comforts of the people have been greatly improved. Dr. Stephenson was the first to introduce the plan of allotments into this parish in 1840, long before such had become general. From the year 1876 he was in failing health, and incapacitated from active duty. His latter days he spent in patient suffering and entire seclusion. His death was sudden, as he passed away in sleep, on June 21, 1889, at the ripe age of eighty-seven years, having held this rectory for fifty-four years, a period beyond any of his predecessors. On the evening before his funeral his body was carried into the chancel of the Church, where it rested until, on the evening of Thursday, June 27th, it was laid in the churchyard, in the presence of many among whom he had lived and served through more than half a century.

Curate-in-charge (1876-89). *John Edward Wharton Rotton*, M.A., LL.D., of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and D.D. of Dublin University; Deacon, 1846; Priest, 1847; served twenty-five years in India; Chaplain at the memorable siege of Delhi in 1857; late Senior Chaplain of Bengal Establishment.

Of commanding presence, and accustomed to deal with soldiers, he formed a strong contrast to the gentle rule of the old Rector. He multiplied and improved the Church services, obtained and gave several gifts to the Parish Church, planted the churchyard with ornamental shrubs, and took an active interest in the general welfare of the parish. But he has left behind him a mark too obtrusive by disfiguring the pages of one of the Church Registers with many records of his doings.

1889. Dec. 28. *John Wilberforce Doran*, M.A., late Scholar of St. John's College, Third of Second Class in Classical Tripos, and Second Class in Theological Tripos.

THE CHURCHWARDENS.

1553.	Thomas Bond.	Thomas Symes.
1578.	John Hale.	—

The following presentment appears in the records of the Court of the Archdeacon of Oxford:

“ 16 January, 1584.

“ Officium domini contra	} perquisit per Dasie die Jovis ad Septimanam elaps' viis et modis in prox'.
“ Simonem Hopper de	
“ Souldren impregnavit	
“ Joannam Turner.	

“ 23 Jan., 1584.

“ Officium domini contra	} decretum est Harper citaud' fore in prox' viis et modis Comparuit
“ Simonem Hopperwell	
“ Joanna Turner semel circiter festum Michaelis ult' in domo patris dicte Joanne and sayethe	

“ further that he meanethe to marie her infra septimanam for they are all asked penitentia in
 “ tempus matrimonū solemnizat’.”

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Names.</i>	<i>Names.</i>
1639—40.	(?) Dodwell.	(?) Bignell.
1641—42.	William Bower.	John Browne.
1643.	Robert Bignell.	John Dodwell, senr.
1644.	(Same.)	Thomas Hodges.
1647—49.	(Same.)	Thomas Dodwell.
1652—55.	Ferdinando Gough.	Richard Rogers.

“ Ferdinando Gough and Richard Rogers, Churchwardens, gave up their accounts before
 “ the inhabitants of Souldern on the 25th day of April, 1656.”

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Names.</i>	<i>Names.</i>
1656.	Anthony Hopkins.	John Hodges.
1657—60.	John Neale.	(Same.)
1661—62.	John Bignell.	Thomas Dodwell.
1665—67.	Richard Gough.	George Southam.
1668—69.	John Hodges.	John Browne.
1670—72.	Ferdinando Gough.	Richard Dolby.
1673.	John Dodwell.	Robert Bignell.
1674.	Edward Bower.	(Same.)
1675.	Robert Hodges.	Thomas Ffotspur.
1676.	John Hodges.	(Same.)
1677.	(Same.)	Thomas Roberts.
1679.	Mr. Ferdinando Gough.	John Dodwell.
1680.	(Same.)	William Bower.
1681.	(Same.)	John King.
1682.	William Bower.	(Same.)
1683.	John Dodwell, senr.	William Harris.
1684.	(Same.)	John Browne.
1688.	William Towerford.	
1689—90.	John Dodwell.	Joseph Heath.
1691.	Thomas Dodwell.	John King.
1692—97.	William Bower.	(Same.)
1698.	(Same.)	Ferdinando Gough.
1699.	(Same.)	
1701—2.	(Same.)	
1704—6.	Matthew Hearne.	
1707—12.	Thomas Young.	
1713.	Robert Bignell.	
1726.	(Same.)	John King.
1727—29.	(Same.)	Thomas Parish.
1731—32.	(Same.)	James Avis.
1733.	(?) Dodwell.	(?) Colgrave.
1734.	Giles Iboll.	

<i>Years.</i>	<i>Names.</i>	<i>Names.</i>
1735.	John Robins.	Robert Bignell.
1736—37.	Mr. Drope Gough.	James Avis.
1738.	Thomas Parish.	(Same.)
1739.	(Same.)	William Philips.
1740.	Mr. Thomas Westcar.	Robert Bignell.
1741—42.	Mr. James Gibbs.	Giles Ibble.
1743.	Mr. Thomas Westcar.	Robert Bignell.
1744.	John Smith.	William Phillips.
1745.	Mr. Thomas Westcar.	Robert Bignell.
1746—47.	Mr. Gibbs.	John Smith.
1748.	Mr. Thomas Westcar.	Giles Ibell.
1749—50.	Mr. William Hill.	John Smith.
1751—52.	Mr. Westcar.	Mr. Gibbs.
1753.	(Same.)	Robert Bignell.
1754.	Mr. Gibbs.	(Same.)
1755—56.	(Same.)	Mr. William Hill.
1757.	Mr. Robert Bignell.	(Same.)
1758—62.	J. Smith.	(Same.)
1763.	(Same.)	Mr. Tho ^s . Gibbs.
1764.	Mr. Minn.	Thomas Bignell.
1765—66.	Mr. W. Hill.	Mr. Gibbs.
1767.	(Same.)	Mr. William Smith.
1768.	(Same.)	Thomas Bignell.
1769.	(Same.)	William Minn.
1770.	(Same.)	William Borton.
1771—73.	(Same.)	Mr. Minn.
1774.	(Same.)	William Smith.

From this time the nominations were kept distinct.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>By the Rector.</i>	<i>By the Parishioners.</i>
1775.	Mr. W. Hill.	W. Smith.
1776—77.	(Same.)	Richard Bolt.
1778—79.	(Same.)	William Minn.
1780—83.	(Same.)	William Smith.
1784—85.	(Same.)	John East.
1786—87.	(Same.)	Samuel Westcar.
1788—89.	(Same.)	John Austin.
1790—92.	(Same.)	Richard Drope Gough.
1793—94.	Richard D. Gough.	William Minn.
1795—96.	—	William Smith.
1797.	—	John East.
1798.	William Minn.	
1799—1800.	—	William Smith.
1801—2.	—	Sampson Boddington.

<i>Years.</i>	<i>By the Rector.</i>
1803—4.	—
1805—6.	—
1807—8.	—
1809—10.	—
1811—12.	—
1813—14.	—
1815—16.	—
1817—18.	—
1819—20.	—
1821.	—
1822.	John Hurlstone.
1823—24.	—
1825.	—
1826—27.	—
1828—31.	—
1832—33.	John Hill.
1834.	—
1835.	—
1836.	John Painter.

Nominations again uncertain :

1837.	E. Boddington.
1838.	R. D. Gough.
1839.	(Same.)
1840.	John Hurlstone.
1841.	(Same.)
1842—43.	James Hurlstone.
1844.	(Same.)
1845.	
1846.	
1847.	
1848.	
1849.	
1850.	
1851—52.	John Boddington.
1853—55.	
1856.	
1857—60.	
1860—68.	
1869—72.	
1873—79.	
1880—81.	(Same.)
1882—84.	(Same.)
1885—86.	Bonner.

<i>By the Parishioners.</i>
John Austin.
James Minn.
R. D. Gough.
William Smith.
James Minn.
R. D. Gough.
James Minn.
Richard Smith.
James Minn.
R. D. Gough.
Sampson Boddington.
Nathaniel Stilgoe.
William Minn.
Richard Smith.
William Minn.
R. D. Gough.
John Painter.
John Boddington.

(Same.)
John Clifford.
Joseph Mays.
James Boddington.
John Scott.
Thomas Hore.
John Scott.
John Clifford.
William East.
Joseph Mays.
Thomas Jones.
John Clifford.
Seth Hughes.
Thomas Merry.
Joseph Mays.
D. H. Waldron.
John Boddington.
J. R. Crook.
(Same.)
Bonner.
A. Hurlstone.
J. W. Bennett.
(Same.)

Years.
1887.
1888—91.

By the Rector.
James Tingey.
Col. England.

By the Parishioners.
J. W. Bennett.
(Same.)

VALUE OF THE RECTORY.

As soon as a rector became resident in any parish efforts were made to provide a settled maintenance for him by assigning to his use the tithe, or payment of a tenth, of all the farm produce of the parish. This payment was for a long period only imperfectly recognised, and the repeated injunctions of kings and synods, from Æthelstan downwards, witness by their repetition to the general disobedience. It is probable that the priest relied far more for his subsistence on his dues, on the "plough alms" after Easter, the "Church-shot" at Martinmas, and "light-shot" thrice in the year, as well as the "soul-shot" that was paid at the open grave.¹ By these offerings the Church of Souldern appears to have become in early times more valuable than any of the other churches of this deanery.² After the transference of it to Eynsham Abbey, the new patrons did it a grievous wrong. It grew into a custom with many of the monasteries to benefit themselves by the temporalities of the benefices which were assigned to their trust. If these arose largely from lands, and were consequently more or less certain and fixed, the monasteries impropriated the lands and the great tithes, which formed the far larger portion of the benefice, providing a vicar to perform the spiritual duties of the cure, to whom they gave the small tithes, and (if it were not too large) the rectory house and glebe for his maintenance. If the glebe-lands were small, and of no considerable value, and the income of the benefice was chiefly dependent on tithes and offerings, which were uncertain and variable, the monasteries contented themselves with exacting a yearly money pension, or portion, from the rector. Eynsham Abbey adopted the latter expedient with this Church of Souldern. The pension they demanded was a large one, being no less than a third of its yearly income.

Among the early endowments of this Church was a church-scot, which consisted of an acre of bread-corn, payable from some land, which the Abbey of Oseney held in demesne in Mixbury, and of 4d. from some land, which they also held in demesne in the hamlet of Fulwell adjoining. During the incumbency of Robert de Hay this corn payment was commuted for an annual money payment of £5.³

A hide of land in the parish of Fritwell, measuring about fifty-five acres, had been early given by some unknown donor to St. Frideswide's Priory in Oxford. As Fritwell was in some way a dependency of Souldern Church, the rector of the latter claimed the tithes of that land. The Priory as patrons of Fritwell Church at once disputed this claim, and appealed to the Pope, Gregory IXth., to settle it. The Pope then appointed three commissioners in England to try the case, who delivered the following judgment in the year 1233:

"To all the sons of Holy Mother Church to whom the present writing shall come, the Priors
"of *St. John's* and *St. James*, and the Dean of *Northampton* send greeting in the Lord—Know ye
"that we have received the mandate of the Lord the Pope in these words, '*Gregory*, Bishop,
"servant of the servants of the Lord, to the beloved sons of *St. John* and *St. James*, and to the
"Dean of *Northampton*, of the Diocese of Lincoln, greeting and Apostolic benediction,—The Prior
"and Convent of *St. Frideswide's Oxford* by a complaint made to us have shewn that *Robert de*
"Sulthorn, and *Nicholas de Beckley* Esquire and certain other clergy and layman of the *Lincoln* and

¹ Green's History of the English People.

² Early History of the Deanery, pp. 74, 75.

³ See History of Mixbury.

“ ‘*Salisbury* dioceses, have injured the same in tithes, which they possess, and in other matters
 “ ‘We commend to your discretion by the Apostolic writings, that the parties having been called
 “ ‘together, ye hear the cause and, the power of appeal having been set aside, that ye end it by a
 “ ‘proper settlement, &c. But if you cannot all be present to attend to these matters, two of you
 “ ‘nevertheless may conclude it. Given at *Avignon* 5 Id. Feb., in the 6th year of our Pontificate.’
 “ By the authority therefore of this mandate we have called *Robert*, Rector of the Church of
 “ *Sulthorn* before us to a trial, who in our presence has confessed that the tithes of one hide of land,
 “ which is called ‘*The Hide of Sulthorn*,’ within the limits of the parish of *Fretwell*, belong of
 “ common right to the said Church of *Fretwell*, about which a question was then moved, and that
 “ so by the same right they belong to the Canons of *St. Frideswide’s Oxford* whose their Church
 “ is. We therefore by counsel had upon these matters with men learned in the law, because by the
 “ confession of the said *Robert* the right of the Canons of *St. Frideswide* over the tithes in question
 “ is fully clear to us, specially adjudge the said tithes to the Canons often mentioned by reason of
 “ their same Church of *Fretwell*, assigning the same away from the said *Robert*, and his Church
 “ of *Sulthorn* for ever. And this sentence we have required the Archdeacon of *Oxford*, and the
 “ Dean of *Heyford* to execute. Done in the year of the Lord’s Incarnation MCCXXXIII¹ in the
 “ Church of the blessed Peter at Northampton on the morrow of the Octave of the Nativity of *S.*
 “ *Mary*, and that this sentence may remain inviolably sure we have thought that our seals should be
 “ affixed to the present writing, and for greater security the Archdeacon of *Oxford* has affixed his
 “ seal.”

After this judgment against him the Rector of Souldern revived his suit in the following year, and a second appeal was made to Rome. The Pope then appointed the Priors of Dunstable and *St. Albans*, and the Archdeacon of *St. Albans*, to judge the cause, who confirmed the former sentence, directing the Rural Dean of *Ytteslep (Islip)* to execute it.² But the pertinacious claimant again appealed to Rome, and at last, in 1236, so far gained his cause that an agreement was made, whereby the tithes in question were let to the rectors of Souldern in perpetuity, subject to a yearly payment of 2s. to the Priory.

In the returns from the parish of *Fritwell* in the first year of *Edward I.*’s reign it is stated :

“ The Rector of the Church of *Sulthorne* holds by the same fee one hide of land which was
 “ formerly given to the Church of *Sulthorn* in perpetual alms.”

Hence it appears that not the tithes only but the land also had come to be considered part of the Souldern glebe.

The earliest record of the value of this Rectory is given in *Pope Nicholas’ Taxation* in 1292 :

				£
“ The Church of <i>Sulthorne</i> with portion deducted	...	...	...	x
“ The portion of the Abbey of <i>Eynsham</i> in the same	...	...	...	v

This valuation was accepted fifty years later at the *Taxation of the Ninths* in 1341. There was but little variation in the two following centuries. *King Henry VIII*’s commissioners reported :

¹ “*Acta Incarnationis Dominicæ Anno MCCXIX in Capella*
 “*St. Andreae apud St. Albanum die Veneris proxime post trans-*
 “*lationem St. Benedicti*” (From *St. Frideswide’s Chartulary*,
 p. 210).

² “*Facta est autem hæc compositio Anno gratiæ MCCXXXVI*
 “*mense Febr. in crastino St. Julianæ Virginis in Ecclesia Omnium*
 “*Sanctorum de Northampton*” (*Ib.*, 211. See *Kennett’s P. A. An.*
 MCCCXXVIII.).

"Sulderne.

	£	s.	d.
"Edmund Gledyll is Rector there, and his rectory there is worth			
"yearly with reprisals in common years on his own recog-			
"nizance	xij	—	—
"Total Thereof	xij	—	—

"Payments.

"Namely	£	s.	d.
"To Master the Dean of the College of <i>Frideswide</i> in Oxford,			
"and the Fellows of the same and their successors paid			
"yearly for a yearly portion	—	ij	—
"To the Abbot of <i>Eynsham</i> , and the Convent of the same of			
"a perpetual pension paid yearly to them and their			
"successors ¹	—	liij	iiij
"Also in Procurations and Synodals paid yearly to the Arch-			
"deacon of Oxford	—	x	vii $\frac{3}{4}$
	£	s.	d.
"The whole allocution	—	lxv	xi $\frac{3}{4}$
"And thus there remains clear	viiij	xiiij	—
	£	s.	d.
"Tenths for the lord the king	—	xvij	v

"Thus the entry in the King's Book stands :

"D. Burcester.

"Yearly Value	Soulderne R. St. Mary Priori de S ^t Frideswide Oxon ij ^s
£ s. d.	Abb. Eynsham Liii. ^s iv ^d . St. John's Coll. Cambridge.
"08 14 02	Yearly Tenths £00 17 ^s 05 ^d ."

The old practice of the rector taking his tithe in kind was no doubt an annoyance to the tithe-payers. So constant efforts were early made to commute them into a money payment. Thus in the decree of inclosure in 1613 it was agreed that a payment of 40s. per yard land should be made in lieu of all tithes. But this was found to be so detrimental to the interests of the rectory² that successive rectors endeavoured to set aside this modus, and to revert to the ancient order of taking the tithes in kind.

¹ "The tythes of Fritwell did formerly belong to Soulderne, but by Pope Eugenius was impropriate to a Monastery of Ensome, reserving the glebe as before, and the three bushels of wheat. And whatever Henry the 8th found in the hands of monasteries he seized into his own at the dissolution of Abbies, &c., even parochial tithes, w^{ch}ever since continue impropriate in lay hands most sacrilegiously. Jehovah Jireh! And the same or some other sacrilegious Pope annexed a pension of tythe to some monastery, payable yearly out of the Rectory of Soulderne. The sum is in all £2 13^s 4^d, viz. £1 6^s 4^d half-yearly, and 4^d acquittance as appears by the acquittance of Edw^d. Izard, Collector, but the acquittance is an encroachment. This pension is likewise now payable to the Crown,

"but sold in K^s Charles II^d's time to one Hornby, or other purchasers of Quit rents. Now this year, 1717, it is in the hands of Mrs. Ann Barton, widow of Mr. Sam Barton, Rector of Great Brickhill, Bucks" (Note among Memoranda in parish chest).

² "40^s at the first inclosure was really as much as £3 10^s now, and would have purchased as much at y^t time. For £10 then would have rented y^t yard land w^{ch} now requires £30, and the rate of 40^s p^r yard land settled by the first inclosure was reverst, because it was less than the true value. And y^e value of land is not likely to fall, but t^{'s} generally believed it will rise, as at this time it doth" (Note in Memoranda for last century).

Thus a great tithe dispute dragged its weary length through many years, and caused many unhappy relations between the rectors and parishioners.¹

"Petition of Thomas Harding, clerk, rector of Souldern, co. Oxon to the King.

"In Trinity Term 10th Jas. I, a decree passed by consent in the Court of Chancery between
 "John Weedon, then Lord of the manor of Souldern, and Thomas Norberie, clerk, a small free-
 "holder there and petitioner's predecessor and pretended Patron of the Church, and other the free-
 "holders and inhabitants by which 40^s for every yard land there, which comes far short of the
 "worth of the tithes, was allotted to Norberie, and his successors in lieu of the same. Petitioner
 "finding the same to have been made without consent of the Ordinary and to be very prejudicial to
 "the Church, in Michaelmas term last preferred his bill into the Court of Chancery for a reversal
 "thereof as to the tithes. Defendants in their answer pretend that any act done by a parson
 "without the consent of his Ordinary, if beneficial to the Church, is binding on the successors.
 "Petitioner is advised that the Ordinary not being party to the decree is sufficient ground for the
 "reversal thereof, and that the pretence of the Church's good must be accounted feigned when the
 "succession attempts to overthrow the decree. Petitioner has received no tithes these 18 months
 "and is no longer able to undergo the expense of this suit; wherefore he prays a reference to the
 "Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Keeper, and the Lord Treasurer ($\frac{1}{2}$ p.) Underwritten

"1. Reference as prayed. Whitehall 2nd April 1638.

"2. Appointment by the referees to hear this buiness on
 "the 2nd May next, 3rd April 1638."

"1638. } Order of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Keeper, and the Lord

"May 4. } Treasurer referees of the business between Thomas Harding clerk, rector of
 "Souldern co. Oxford, and the Lord of the manor and the freeholders there. Appointment to hear
 "the same on Tuesday next, and in case the Lord's occasions will not give leave for that day, the
 "parties are to attend the day following.

"(Sealed with the seal of the Council $\frac{1}{2}$ p.)"²

There is no record of any further proceedings at this time. Mr. Harding died five years later, and Mr. Hodges the intruded minister dropped the dispute, during the troubled times of the Commonwealth.

During Mr. Hodges' incumbency the tithe was let.

" John Dodwell Sen ^r rented the tythe corne one year of Mr	£
" Hodges, at...	70
" The hay was worth then	30
" Wool and Lamb	20
" Milk, Calves, and all small tythes	10
" Besides all feeding cattle, adgistments bought and sold...	20
<hr/>	
" In all ...	150 "

As public affairs were settling down after the restoration of the monarchy, and soon after the advent of a new and energetic rector, the tithepayers made another attempt to bring about a modus. On February 12, 1673, they exhibited before the Court of Chancery a "bill of complaint

¹ "The Rectory of Soulderne hath been engag'd in trouble and
 "suits for tithes ever since y^e enclosure," etc., etc.

² Calendar of State Papers, Domestic (*Ibid.*), 1637-8, pp. 242,
 405.

"against B. Turner, the Rector, concerning certain customs, and the manner of tything alleged to be in use within the said parish, and petitioned that some certain rate might be made and settled to continue for ever to be paid in lieu of the tithes of the said lands and tenements, and that the same might be decreed."

By mutual consent the question was referred to the Bishop of London for arbitration, who decreed that a sum of £2 12s. 6d. per yard land should be paid yearly in lieu of all tithes. But this did not meet the claim of the rector. "For as the parish by the inclosure has been doubly or trebly improved, and taxt by the Hundred proportionably to that improvement, so the tithes have been diminished since the arable was converted to pasture¹ and hath and must pay taxes for y^t improvement, by which it suffers loss, unless the rate tythe be settled answerable to the improvements." Mr. Turner therefore claimed the ancient legal right of tithes in kind. For not only was much arable land turned into pasture, but various devices were planned by which the profits of the latter were lessened either because of agistments² or "because of buying and selling before tith" in kind fall or "because 'tis eaten with unprofitable Cattle as Horses, Yearlings, Feeding Cattle, &c."

"Instances of w^{ch} are these :

"Chesnell a great Pasture ground belonging to M^r John Weedon and esteemd yearly worth four score pounds by agistm^{ts} frequently taken in and Removd again afforded not in the year 1667 ten shillings for all the Tith to the Rectory and yett the Shepherds that kept that ground affirmd there was near 100lb. made y^t year of it to the Owner.

"D^r Owens Estate of Pasture ground in the occupation of John Juffs who deals in buying and selling of cattle w^{ch} grounds are rented att thirty three pounds or above yearly has not afforded to y^e Rectory for tith above twenty three shillings any of those three years 1667-68-69.

"The Green Close of M^r Dodwells rented by M^r Lord at 25lb. p annm did not afford five shillings for Tith 1667.

"The Parish of Fritwell next adjoining to Solderne brings in for Tith corne to the Impro-priator ninety nine pound p annm, besides the Vicarage w^{ch} is worth above thirty pounds yearly.

"Yett the Parish of Solderne w^{ch} allwaies was and is esteemed worth three or four of Fritwell by reason of the Pasturag not yielding tith considerable cannot be lett for above four score and ten pounds for tith both of Rectory and Vicarage together ; what is sayd of Fritwell may bee sayd of Croton next adjoyning Somerton and many other Parishes. So y^t the Tith of Solderne though not worth near so much as Fritwell or Croton paies thrice as much yearly to the Kings Taxes."

Under these circumstances Mr. Turner was obliged to seek legal redress.

"Soulderne.³ Mich. Term 27 Car. II^d. 18 Nov. 1675.

"Turner Clerk against Weedon and others.

"The Rector of Soulderne claims Tithes in kind. The Defendants plead a modus of 4^d for

¹ "Before the inclosure there were kept in the towne of Soulderne near 20 teams, now but 3 or 4 at most" (Memoranda).

² Agistment is where other men's cattle are taken into any ground, at a certain rate per week. It is so called because the cattle are suffered *agiser*, i.e., to be levant and couchant there. Our graziers call cattle which they thus take in to keep *Gise-*

ments, because they *gise* or *price* the ground (Jacob's Law Dictionary).

³ Symonds' Collection of MSS., vol. VI, p. 11, in the Office of the Clerk of the Peace for Oxford.

See the case of "Turner v. Weedon and others" reported in Gwillim's Collections of Acts and Records of Parliament, with reports of cases in Courts of Law and Equity respecting Tithes, II., 524.

“ every barren sheep and dry beast ; a half penny for every sheep sold after Candlemas ; a third of
 “ the wool of all sheep brought in after Candlemas ; and that no tithe is due for Coppice and Hedge
 “ Row wood used in husbandry. But the Court declared all such customs to be unreasonable, and
 “ decreed the tithes of Coppice Wood, Hedge Rows and Loppings, Sheep unshorn, dry Cattle,
 “ Wool, Milk, Lamb and Calves to be paid in kind.”

After several hearings of this case the Court declared that the custom of a halfpenny for a sheep was an unreasonable custom. And as to all the other customs (except 4d. for a dry cow, and the tithe of aftermath or second crop of meadow, for which the Court will direct a trial at law) they declared all the other customs pretended by the defendants to be unreasonable, and do overrule the same.

“ Whereupon it is this day ordered by the Court that the Defendants shall pay their tithes in
 “ kind to the plaintiff, viz., for Coppice Wood and for Hedge Rows, and Loppings of trees, where
 “ sold or not spent in the house ; the 10th of the value of the depasturage of sheep, according to the
 “ time of their being kept, sold and removed unshorn ; and likewise for all other dry cattle fed, kept
 “ or depastured (except beasts of the plough and pail and dry cows which is referred to a trial
 “ at law) to pay according to the value of the herbage.

“ Tithe wool to be paid, and tithe milk at all times of the year. Lambs to be tithed, when
 “ fit to live without the dam, and Calves to be paid in kind, and it is referred to the Deputy Remem-
 “ brancer to compute and report the same.

“ And as to the custom of 4^d for every dry cow fed, and for the aftermath, or second crop of
 “ meadow, the same is referred to a trial at law, and the equity reserved till after such trial had.”

The following paper sent to St. John's College by Mr. Boon the Bursar contains the substance of the information collected by him concerning this rectory at the beginning of the present century :

“ In Soulderne parish there are 5 acres of inclosed glebe arable and 4 do. pasture with
 “ orchard, two kitchen gardens, and Churchyard ; in all about 11 acres contiguous to the house.

“ In Fritwell parish there are about 55 acres of glebe dispersed in the open fields with 8 horse
 “ or cow commons, and 62 sheep commons.

“ Present value of the Living.

Present value of the Living.						£
" Money Payment in lieu of all tythes	...	...	...	...	120	
" Estim ^d value of Fritwell Glebe	...	...	...	...	55	
" Do. of Home Glebe...	...	...	...	...	20	
						<hr/>
						195
						<hr/>
				£	s.	d.
" Deduct Land Tax Souldern	...	...	...	17	14	6
" " Do. Fritwell	...	...	...	2	12	4½
" " Quit Rent Souldern	...	...	...	2	13	4
" " Tenths Procural ^a ...	...	...	...	2	0	0
				<hr/>		
				25	0	0
				<hr/>		
						25
						<hr/>
						170

" Value of Living if subject to tythe under the present mode of levying.

" There are about 1,270 acres of land nearly divided into arable and grass or perhaps the " grass may predominate.

						£	s.	d.
" 635 acres at 6 ^s}	...	...	...	} per acre }		317	10	0
" 635 acres at 4 ^s	...	...	...		
" Fritwell glebe...	...	...	...	...	...	55	0	0
" Home Do.	...	...	...	...	...	20	0	0
						<hr/>		
						392	10	0
" Deduct as before ...						25	0	0
						<hr/>		
						367	10	0
						<hr/>		

" Fritwell parish is expected to be inclosed very soon, as the person, who is said to have " been the only obstacle to it is lately dead. This would increase the value of Fritwell Glebe " perhaps £30 a year.

" Cox the brewer in London is owner of about $\frac{1}{2}$ of Souldern parish. Cartwright, a man of " fortune who lives close by viz. at Aynho, about $\frac{1}{4}$. Other proprietors in different smaller " proportions, some occupying their own. Horseman's sons inherit from their father about 44 " acres in the parish.

" The House is of stone, rough as to workmanship, old and rather large. The ground " rooms awkwardly disposed. House and Church situated rather low. Sermon in morning and " Prayers in afternoon.

" Turnpike to Bicester very near to Parsonage. Oxford Canal runs through the parish. " Country round pleasant.

" Young Horseman says His father always supposed that the decree in Chancery ought to be " set aside, but was deterred from making the attempt by the fear of the expense and consequent " ill will of the parishioners.

" For this forbearance he never rec^d any compliment or compensation. His notion was that " the Living might be doubled. There are 3 or four rich farmers, who might be disposed to contest " the point and in case of failure in the Courts of law w^d lay down the arable land in grass, w^{ch} " might most easily be done."

" At the beginning of my incumbency," says Mr. Jones, rector in 1806, " I set aside an old " composition, which was paid to and acquiesced in by my immediate predecessor Mr. Horseman, " and all his predecessors for the last 130 years. The old composition for tithes amounted to £122, " and their present value is considerably more than £300 per ann., besides the glebe which consists " of about 135 acres."¹

The Commissioners for the inclosure of Fritwell in 1808 set apart an allotment measuring 122 acres 2 r. 3 p., in lieu of the old yard lands, and rights of common. The particulars of this land are given in the last of the Terriers, which follow.²

¹ A case on the tithe of Souldern at the beginning of the present century was submitted by St. John's College to Sir Samuel Romilly. The statement of the case contains some interesting details as to tithes in general.

² Some letters from Mr. Horseman and Mr. Jones, rectors, concerning the Fritwell enclosure are preserved among the records of St. John's College. The former show the writer to have been a shrewd man of business.

TERRIERS.

Among the Canons Ecclesiastical of 1603 it was ordained "that the Archbishops and all
 "bishops within their several dioceses shall procure (as much as in them lieth) that a true note and
 "terrier of all the glebes, lands, meadows, gardens, orchards, houses, stocks, implements, tenements,
 "and portions of tithes lying out of their parishes (which belong to any parsonage or vicarage, or
 "rural prebend) be taken by the view of honest men in every parish by the appointment of the
 "bishop (whereof the minister to be one) and be laid up in the bishop's registry, there to be for a
 "perpetual memory thereof."

General attention was paid to this Canon soon after its enactment. Several terriers of the
 parishes of this Deanery are extant in the Bishop's Registry in Oxford. They are almost all of the
 XVIIth century, and many of the same years, 1634, 1679, 1685, from which it appears that at
 certain periods special efforts were made by the bishops to put the Canon in force. Very few exist
 of a later date.

"A Terrier of y^e Parsonage of *Soulderne*. April 4, 1638.

"Imprimis A dwelling house new built, two Barnes and a stable in good repair.

"It^m Two orchards, two gardens, and two fishponds.

"Two closes adjoyning thereunto, conteyning 12 acres or thereabouts be it more or less.

"It^m four yard lands of Gleabe with the Co^mmodities apperteyning, and one tenement and
 "small yard in the towne and fields now called *Fritwell* Feilds.

"Richard Gough, }
 "John Dodwell. } Churchwardens.
 "Richard Dodwell, Sidesman."

"A terrier of the parsonage of *Solderne* Ap^l 7th 1673.

"Imprimis one little meadow on the West side of the house conteyning one acre and 14
 "perches, and one close on the East side of the house, where there was a ditch and a quickthorn
 "hedge made by M^r Turner 1672 conteyning in all 6 acres and 66 perches, so that all the Gleabe
 "land in the parish of *Solderne* is seaven acres and a halfe besides one dwelling house, one barne,
 "one stable, two orchards, and a garden and there is one little close on the N. side of the house
 "betwixt the Orchard and the Dunin well w^{ch} lies for the fish of Millmeads now M^r *Cartwright's* of
 "*Aynho*.

"John Rogers, }
 "Thomas Fletcher, } Church
 "Wardens."

"A True Note and Terrier of all the Glebe Lands, &c., taken, made, and rendered this
 "4th day of June by the appointment of the Right Rev^d Father in GOD, Charles, Lord Bishop
 "of the said diocese, and exhibited before the said Prelate at his Triennial Visitation holden at
 "Bicester on June 5, in the year of our Lord GOD 1811.

"Imprimis. One slated Dwelling in the front 74^{ft} in length, and 28^{ft} in breadth; in the
 "Kitchen and back 32^{ft} 7^{inches} in length, and 21^{ft} in breadth, with a Dairy adjoining 16^{ft} 6ⁱⁿ in length,
 "and 14^{ft} in breadth, all with the walls included; two stables, thatched under the same key, 40^{ft} in
 "length, and 20^{ft} in breadth; a Barn, of two bays thatched, built by the present Rector in the year
 "of our Lord 1810, 27^{ft} in length, and 20^{ft} in breadth, the walls included; a thatched Cowhouse,
 "built by the present Rector in 1810, 15^{ft} 9ⁱⁿ in length, and 13^{ft} 9ⁱⁿ in breath, all with the walls

"included; one small thatched henhouse, and a small thatched Provender Room, both adjoining
 "the Stables. Two necessaries, slated, built by the present Rector in 1810; a small Coal and
 "Woodhouse, thatched. One garden, walled of stone for fruit trees on the north, the north-east,
 "north-west, and western sides of it, and built by the present Rector in 1810; one yard, one
 "pleasure ground in front of the house, one orchard and nursery for trees, all containing by
 "admeasurement 2 acres of land; one inclosure, called the Dairy ground, together with another
 "close, called the Paddock, to the north of the Orchard, and the Spinny and old Pond, altogether
 "containing by admeasurement 3^{acres} 2^r 39^p. The fence on the north side of the Dairy Ground is
 "made by Mr. W. Smith of Souldern, or his tenant or tenants; the fence on the west side of the
 "said Dairy Ground is made by Rob^t Kilby Cox, Esq^r, or his tenant or tenants; the fence on the
 "north-west and north sides of the said Dairy ground is made by W. R. Cartwright, Esq^r, or his
 "tenant or tenants; the fence on the north side of the said paddock is made by the said W. R.
 "Cartwright, Esq^r, or his tenant or tenants. Another inclosure, called the High Close, containing
 "by admeasurement 6^a 3^r 30^p. The wall on the north side of the High Close is made by William
 "Ralph Cartwright, Esq^r, or his tenant or tenants; the fence on the south side of the said close
 "is made by Mr. W. Minn, or his tenant or tenants. There is in the village of Fritwell, belonging
 "to the Rector of Souldern, a thatched Cottage with a garden, containing by admeasurement
 "31 perches, in the occupation of Joseph Johnson. There is likewise belonging to the Rectory of
 "Souldern, in the said parish of Fritwell, upon an allotment of land lately assigned to the said
 "Rector of Souldern by virtue of an Act of Parliament lately passed for inclosing lands in the
 "Manor and Parish of Fritwell; a slated Barn, built in the year 1808, consisting of five Bays
 "60^{ft} in length, and 21^{ft} 8ⁱⁿ in breadth with the walls. Likewise a slated stable adjoining, and built
 "in the same year, 33^{ft} 5ⁱⁿ in length, and 18^{ft} 5ⁱⁿ in breadth with the walls; likewise a thatched
 "hovel 27^{ft} in length, and 20^{ft} in breadth with the walls; likewise another thatched hovel 34^{ft} in
 "length, and 13^{ft} in breadth with the walls. These hovels were built in the year 1810, the farmyard
 "was walled of stone in the year 1810, and contains 20 perches of land, or thereabouts. Behind
 "the last-mentioned Barn is the Stackyard, likewise walled of stone in the year 1810, and con-
 "taining 1 rood of land, or thereabouts. The Glebe allotment aforesaid, in the parish of Fritwell,
 "belonging to the Rectory of Souldern, is at present parcelled out into 6 inclosures, the subdivision
 "fences having been well planted with quicksets in the years 1808 and 1809 by the present Rector.
 "The glebe allotment in Fritwell aforesaid, is bounded on the north side by a stream of water, which
 "is likewise the boundary of the parishes of Aynho and Fritwell, and of the Counties of Northampton
 "and Oxford; the glebe allotment in Fritwell aforesaid is bounded on the Eastern Extremity by
 "lands allotted to the Reverend William Shippon Willes, Clerk, in lieu of Tithes in the said
 "parish of Fritwell; the fence on the Eastern Extremity of the Glebe allotment in Fritwell
 "belonging to the Rectory of Souldern is bounded on the South extremity by a carriage road
 "lately made leading from Ploughley Hill to Round Hill and thence to Tusmore; the same is
 "bounded on the Western side of it by the Turnpike road leading from Bicester to Banbury
 "through the village of Aynho; the whole glebe allotment in the parish of Fritwell belonging to
 "the Rectory of Souldern (besides the cottage and garden before mentioned in the village of Frit-
 "well) contains with the mounds and fences 122 acres 2^r 3^p.

"Item. All the tithes of whatsoever kind they may be growing and renewing within the
 "said parish of Souldern are belonging to the said Rectory with the exception of some meadow
 "ground near Souldern Mill containing about 9 acres of land being at present the property of

“ W. R. Cartwright Esq^e of Aynho, for the tithes of which mentioned land a parcel of land containing
 “ by estimation 1^a or 20^p was given in exchange to Thomas Norbury Clerk, formerly Rector of the
 “ said parish of Souldern. This last mentioned parcel of land is included in the Glebe in Souldern
 “ above specified, but the situation of it cannot at present be justly ascertained.

Item, to the said Rectory of Souldern is belonging an oblation of 6^d for every Churching of
 “ a woman.

“ Item, for every wedding whether by publication of banns or by license 5^s.

“ Item, mortuaries according to Act of Parliament.

“ Item, 6^s 8^d for the grave in the Churchyard of every person not an inhabitant of the
 “ parish.

“ Item, for every grave dug and opened in the Church half a guinea.

“ Item, for every person aged 16 years and upwards 2^s yearly due at Easter.

“ Item, the Churchyard containing by admeasurement 2 roods or thereabouts, adjoining to
 “ the ground of M^r W. Smith on the South, to the gardens of the Rector on the East, and South to
 “ the Church lane, likewise on the South to the garden of the Rector, on the North to the Court in
 “ front of the Parsonage House to the North and to the Glebe on the West.

“ There is also due to the Parish Clerk for every man and his wife 2^d each yearly, for every
 “ wedding by banns 1^s, for every wedding by licence 2^s 6^d; there is likewise due to him also a
 “ stipend of £2 5^s yearly; there is likewise due to him for every funeral including grave-digging and
 “ tolling of the Bell 3^s.

“ Belonging to the said Parish of Souldern are, first, the Parish Church an ancient structure
 “ containing in length 40^{ft}, in breadth 34^{ft}, 6ⁱⁿ with the walls, the Chancel in length 20^{ft}, in breadth
 “ 13^{ft} within the walls, the Steeple 15^{ft} square with the walls, in height 48^{ft}; five bells with their
 “ ropes and frames.

“ Within the Chancel is one Communion Table with a covering for the same of blue cloth,
 “ also one linen cloth for the same with one napkin, one Pewter Flaggon, one silver Challice, one
 “ small silver Paten, one Basin for the Offertory, one new Chest of Oak with a lock in the Belfry,
 “ two old without locks in the Belfry, one Pulpit and Reading Desk, one pulpit cushion of blue
 “ cloth, one large folio Bible well bound, and in good preservation printed by John Field at
 “ Cambridge in the year 1660, two large Common Prayer Books, the Ten Commandments on the
 “ North wall, the Lord's Prayer and Apostle's Creed on the South wall, one Bier, two Surplices,
 “ two Parchment Register books, one beginning in the year 1668 complete, the second beginning
 “ in 1736 and continued to the present time. Besides one Register book for marriages according
 “ to Act of Parliament continued to the present time.

“ In testimony of the Truth of the before-mentioned particulars and of every of them, We,
 “ the Minister Churchwardens and Principal Inhabitants have set our hands this 4th day of June in
 “ the year of our Lord GOD 1811.

“ Robert Jones,	Rector.
“ William Minn,	} Church-wardens.
“ Will ^m Smith	
“ James Minn,	} Principal Inhabitants.”
“ Hen ^y Essery,	

All disputes about tithes have been now set at rest by the Commutation Act. The rent-

charge as apportioned by the Commissioners in 1842 is £431 10s. per annum. The present value of this rectory therefore is :

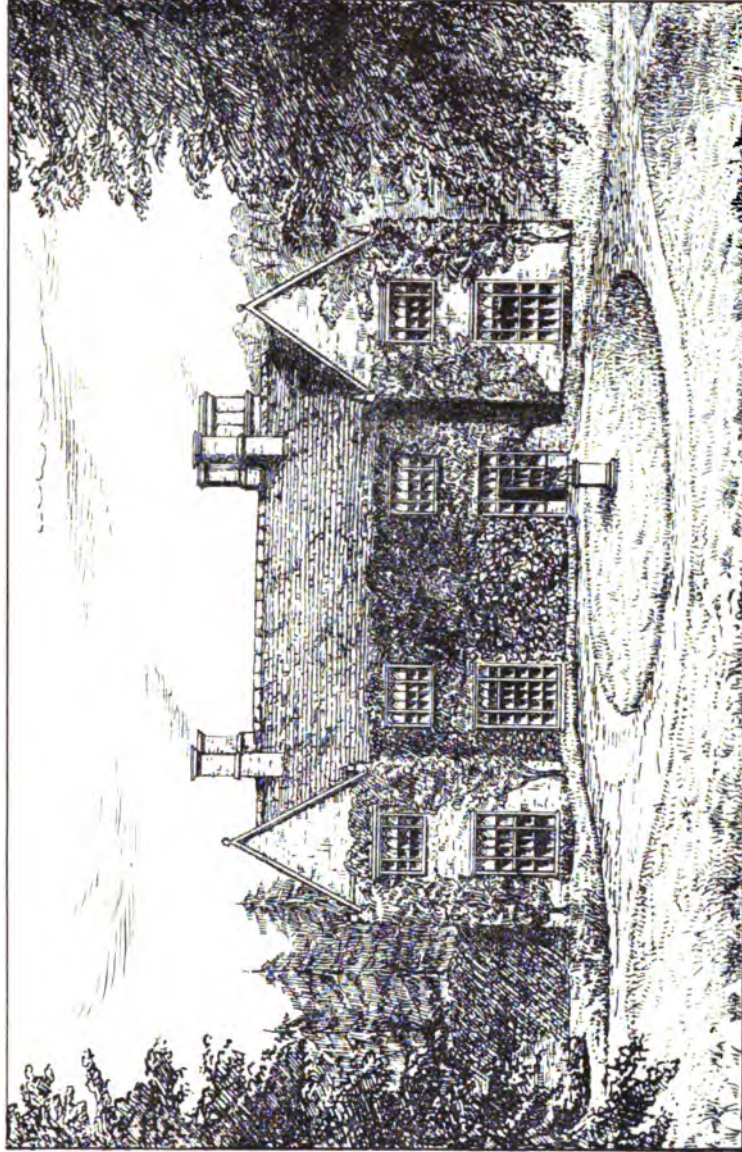
	£	s.	d.
Average in 1891	326	8	1
Rent of Glebe in 1891	242	3	1
Fees	1	0	0
Rent of a Cottage	5	15	0
Total ...	575	6	2

Deductions.

	£	s.	d.
Parochial Rates and Taxes	84	8	1½
Insurance	1	13	9
Tenths	0	17	10
Cost of Collection	2	0	0
Quit Rent	0	5	0
Procurations	0	9	0
Q. Anne's Bounty	59	13	0
Total ...	149	6	8½

THE RECTORY HOUSE.

The Præ-Reformation house, like the other parsonage houses of that date, consisted of a hall in the centre with a soler or apartment answering to the parlour or drawing-room of more modern times, at one end, and a buttery, cellar and kitchen at the other. A staircase within a small projecting gable in the centre of the house, led out of the hall into the upper apartments. This mediæval house was left standing, when Mr. Harding, rector (1622-48) added to it on the south side the faire "parsonage house," which is described in the Terrier of 1638, as then "new built." Subsequently alterations and additions were made. Mr. Jones in the present century laid out a considerable sum of money in improving the south front, giving it the appearance represented in the accompanying sketch. Mr. Risley also, when curate in charge made additions at the back. All the buildings on the glebe were allowed to fall into a ruinous state during Dr. Stephenson's long incumbency, so that after his death in 1889 the dilapidations on the rectory property was valued at £588 9s. Nothing of this sum was recoverable from his estate, so that the entire cost of repair or rebuilding fell upon the new rector. The latter plan was preferred, and as the site of the old rectory house was low and damp, being subject to continual drainage from the higher ground of the churchyard, a new and elevated spot was chosen for the site of a new house. The old Præ-Reformation house, and the additions which had been made to it, was then pulled down, so that not a vestige now remains of the old buildings, where had resided the parish clergy of many generations. The materials of the latter (window frames, doors, beams, tiles, etc., so far as they were found suitable) were used in the erection of the new house. The corner-stone of the present rectory house was laid by Mrs. England, of the Manor House, on October 20, 1890, and the house was finished in July of



W. W. Law & Sons, Photo-litho, Northampton

SOULDERN RECTORY.

the next year, according to the plans of Mr. G. E. Bruton, F.S.A., the diocesan architect, at a cost of £1,434, which was mainly defrayed by a loan from Queen Anne's Bounty.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHAPEL.

It is certain that for many years after the Reformation in England there was no Romish sect in this country. Individuals here and there refused to conform to the reformed faith, and continued their obedience to Rome.

Soon after the first decade of Queen Elizabeth's reign, a sect was formed, without any hierarchy, representing not the primitive Church, but the existing Roman government, and it was not until a few years ago that the Romanists gave to their sect, by the introduction of a schismatical hierarchy, the appearance of a church, in rivalry to the old Catholic Church which our forefathers reformed.¹

In the Church Registers of this parish several burials are recorded "according to the rites of the Church of England." These words certainly imply that the persons, whose names are thus distinguished, were buried according to the rites of a Church of which they had not been members. And then if it be doubtful to what religious society they belonged, the occasional addition of the word "Papista" completely decides this question.

Among the names of Souldern Roman Catholics in the XVIIth century those of Weedon and Kilbye hold a prominent place, and, presumably of a humbler class, those of Anstey, Horn, and Lepington, names which have now altogether disappeared from the roll of Souldern parishioners. It is probable that a domestic chapel was consecrated in the old Manor House of the Weedons, and it is certain that in the present house a chapel has been in constant use from an early period until a recent date. This mission was doubtless served by the priest, who was in residence at Tusmore House, for there is no evidence of a priest resident at Souldern, and there are some entries of the baptisms of infants belonging to Roman Catholic families in the Parish Church Registers.

"Elizabetha Ansty filia Johannis (Papistæ) and Katharinæ uxoris ejus secundum Ritus "Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ Baptiz Sept. 7, 1679.

"Rogerus }
"Matthæus } Ansty Gemelli privatim Jan. 10, 1687.

"Johannis Panter filius Richardi and Mariæ Papistæ uxoris ejus Martii 6 1688."

The chapel in Souldern House was closed in 1781, and the worshippers then went to Tusmore. The chapel at Tusmore was closed in 1810, but after some years, in 1832, a chapel was built at Hethe.

In 1852 Dr. Dolman came to reside at Souldern, and he opened again a chapel in the village. The old room in his house having fallen into a state of decay, another apartment in the south wing was set apart for the purpose. The old vestments were brought from London, but being much worn, and of an obsolete pattern, a new set was obtained in close accordance with mediæval design; and new furniture for the altar was also provided. Dr. Dolman died in 1867, and in the summer of 1869 his widow conceived the design of building a small chapel to his memory. The foundations of this chapel were laid, and the building was completed in 1876; and on February 2 in the year following the chapel was opened by the Very Rev. Canon O'Sullivan, vicar general of

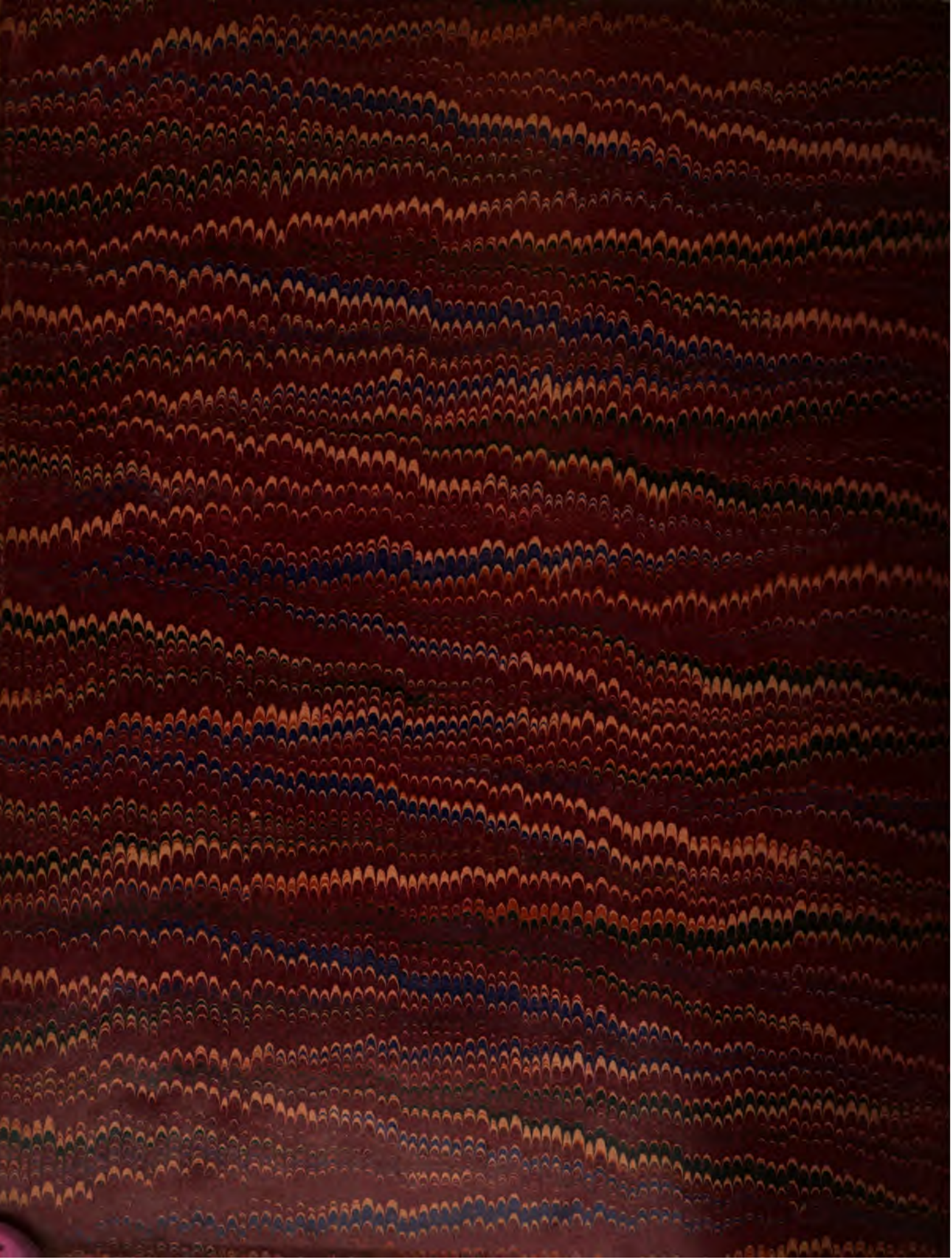
¹ Hook's *Lives of the Archbishops*, New Series, vol. IV., chap. VI.

the diocese, and placed under the patronage of St. Joseph. This new chapel, though unpretending, is quite ecclesiastical in its main features, and the open timber roof and plain lancet windows have a pleasing effect. There is a representation in stained glass above the altar of our Lord's resurrection. The altar rails are those belonging to the original chapel.

The priests connected with Souldern House have been :

The Rev. Samuel Corbishley,
 The Rev. Alfred Maguire,
 The Rev. Joseph Robson,
 The Rev. Hugh McCarten,
 The Rev. Frederick Morris,
 The Rev. Samuel Glossop (now in charge).

A well-built school has been erected close to the chapel upon a site given by Colonel Cox, and there is a resident school mistress. There are nine Roman Catholic families at the present time resident in the village, and three other families of which some members are of that faith.



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